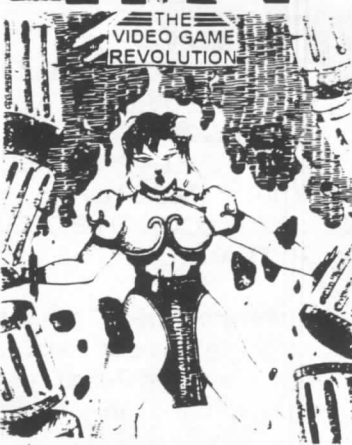
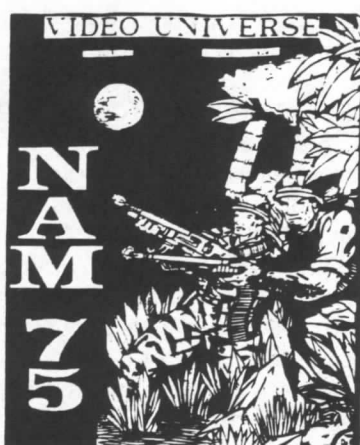


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FANTAZINE

STAGE 1 LEVEL 5

NOVEMBER 1993

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All game titles, characters, and likenesses are the property of their respective companies and are not related to Fantazine. The opinions expressed by members of the staff do not necessarily reflect those of the entire staff. Please bear this in mind when responding to individual articles. Should you feel the need to cuss the Editor out for anything he says in this issue, Pat can be reached at **1-616-452-1744**. Tim Priest can be reached by shining a spotlight with a large "T" over the greater Grand Rapids area. And so ends another exciting colophon!!!!

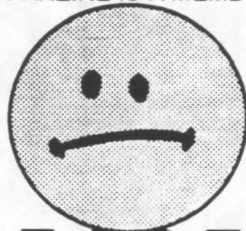
REYNOLDS RAP

Don't believe anyone who tells you that publishing a fanzine is easy or that it gets easier with time. It also doesn't help to put outrageous demands on yourself, like promising to review every other EG 'zine I've seen, for example. This has been the hardest issue to put together yet. I also feel that it is our best. Not only did I manage to keep that promise and include a mega "Fanzine Feedback" section, but I've gotten a ton of new staff members as well.

A lot has happened since last issue. Foremost regarding Fantazine, I've decided to officially go bi-monthly, as well as hike the price up a bit. I'm still not even coming close to breaking even on this little venture, but I would like to soften the blow a little. Fantazine has been reviewed 6 times in national magazines, and I owe Arnie Katz of Electronic Games and Computer Game Review a big thank you for 5 of them. Chris Beniak at VideoGames gets the credit for the other one. All told, I'd say we've got a shot at "Fanzine of the year", assuming that EG does that again.

But enough self-indulgence, this time I'm really going to editorialize. Recently there has been a big backlash against Capcom for their upgrade tactics with Street Fighter II. Paradox, Video Game Review, and even Fantazine have run several articles bashing the company for their money grubbing game plan. Well, I think it's about time I state my stand on this issue. An article in the latest issue of Spectrum states "I'm sick of buying what is essentially the same game over and over again". This really bothers me, because **NO ONE IS FORCING YOU TO BUY IT!!!!!!** All you idiots (and I do mean that) can bitch and complain all you want about it, but why?! Capcom has created the best-selling, most popular video game ever, and has decided to stick with a winning formula instead of risk losing it with a whole new sequel, and I can't say I mind. Since SFII debuted 3 years ago, Capcom has added 8 more characters that weren't playable in the first game. That's like a whole new game! I know that a lot of you who have been actively trashing Capcom are also in line to play Super SFII and buy the latest SNES upgrade as well, and I have one thing to say to you - you're a bunch of hypocrites. You are actively attacking a company for succeeding. This issue is a lot like the violence in gaming thing - everybody seems to be jumping on the Capcom-bashing bandwagon because it's the popular thing to do, and that really sucks. If you don't like it, don't buy it, don't put your quarters into it, and for God's sake, don't waste my time bitching about it, because I don't want to hear it. There are a lot of games out there that are much more deserving of your criticism; I'll admit that SFII Turbo is a lot like the first SFII game released last year, but that doesn't reduce the fact that it is still a great game. One final question on this topic: how many of you Capcom-bashers still play SFII on a regular basis, 3 years after it first appeared and over a year after the first SNES game? I know that it's the only game that old that I still play and am still not sick of, haven't mastered, and still enjoy, probably more than I did when I first saw it.

THIS FANZINE IS A MEMBER OF



F.A.C.E.

PAT

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I know I skipped some things, but, well, find them yourself.

THE ANSWER TO A FANDOM CONVENTION by ALEX FRIAS

Ever since the beginning of fandom, faneds have been interested in organizing a fandom convention. NAEGE sparked this interest with all the coverage it was getting from fanzines and people like Arnie Katz in Electronic Games. When NAEGE died, I think that for some people, the dream of a fandom convention died with it. But I don't believe it did die. We can still have one, but instead of having people going to a certain location to meet, we can all do it from the comfort of our own homes.

Now you might be saying to yourself, "Come on Alex, how do you expect to have a fandom convention if we're thousands of miles apart from each other?" That's where the Sierra Network comes in. As some of you know, TSN is an on-line service for IBM users which lets you participate in real-time games and conversations with other gamers thousands of miles apart. I've been on for about four months now, and I'm already part of a Red Baron squadron, meet with writers from Next Generation, and have a cool handle. Not to mention all of the friends I've made already.

TSN offers many advantages over having faneds meet at a location. For example, one group of gamers can be in a conference discussing Mortal Kombat, while another group is playing a friendly game of Hearts or Red Baron. The possibilities are endless. And then there are the people who'll say "I don't have an IBM" or "My computer isn't compatible with TSN." Two answers - 1. I hear Soft PC works with TSN in case you have a MAC. 2. Conferences allow you to capture the conversation, so you can get someone to capture the conversation, print it up, and send it to you.

Now you're probably saying "But how are we going to see what other people look like?" Easy, TSN allows you to make faces based on how you want other people to see you. They feature tons of different hair styles, faces, noses, clothing, etc. so you can make it as realistic or unrealistic as possible.

Now comes the almighty question, "How much?" Out of all the on-line services, TSN is the cheapest. Basic rate: \$12.95 a month which includes 30 hours of evening/weekend time with Constant Companion which features card/board games, bulletin boards, conference/chat rooms, and your own mailbox. They have other features and lands like SierraLand, LarryLand, and MedievalLand.

And now comes, "Is it fun?" TSN is VERY fun and VERY addictive; I've found myself on-line for two hours at a time. Most of the time I'm having so much fun that I don't notice the time. Plus, TSN is a great way to advertise your fanzine. Right now Next Generation and my Viewpoint are in a tug of war for subscribers since we're the only fanzines on TSN. So give TSN a try, call 1-800-SIERRA1 for a free membership kit with 3 trial hours. I'm sure that if you see how much fun TSN is you'll want to stay. While you try it out see if you can spot me under IcemanHT and my mailbox # is 55348 in case you get e-mail. But if you decide to stay with TSN, write or call me. My address is 265 Cherry St Suite 6J, New York NY 10002 and my telephone # is 1-212-513-7656 in case you prefer to talk one on one. I'll see if we can set something up so we can meet with each other. Hope to see you on-line.

THE RUSS PERRY JR. LETTER PAGE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GUESS WHO?

Pat:

Boy, is it my imagination or was #4 thicker than 1-3?

I loved the "Greater Demon/Lesser Demons" credits in the colophon... to make up for it later you might try "Pope/Cardinals" or "Holy Father/Seraphim" (too blasphemous? maybe "Seraph/Cherubim" - you'll have to research the angel ranks (and singular/plural terms), but I'm pretty sure the seraphim rank above the chrubim).

Other possibilities? "QB/Offensive line", "Coach/Little Leaguers", "Freddy/The dreamers". All sorts of absurdities, I suppose, would be further possible.

I should admit that I was one who didn't get the Patricia/Jessica pic on #3. It would've been easy if you'd kept your glasses and done the weird hair on Jess.

Should I be afraid that David Chau wants to see more pix of me (rather than Heather)? Maybe I should dig out my Kodachromes of me at Iceland's only nude beach...

I really have to disagree with Mark Allen about the 5200 controllers - they do too suck! Mark missed the point about the problem with the sticks being non-centering. When I use a normal stick, and I want to go up, I push up, just like Mark said about the 5200 stick. But if I'm using a 5200 stick and want to stop moving, I need to find the centered position - damned hard in the heat of things - rather than just let the stick center itself. And letting it center does not mean letting go the way Mark stated. That WOULD be stupid.

I have to correct some stuff from the interview... I do own a TG-16, but not the Duo or TGCD. Also, note the spelling of Dethkorpz - it's not a "z" but a backwards "s", and there's an umlaut over the "k". I guess it's hard to do, though, eh? I used a font editor to do it properly for our album notes. The beer tasting I mentioned was great.

Millrose's Belgian Ale was my fave. In the FANN/Gea question you have me saying "I know quite few faneds...", and that should be "quite a few". The "desert island" question should say "all Supercharger games on one cassette". Rave Software in the jobs question is actually Raven. And I should point out that the third pic is entitled "Demons Stole My Bass".

By the way, is the suicidal master disk going to delay #5 even further?

As to the Groo letter... My friend's Groos are still buried and may stay that way. But I DO know that it has to be (Russ proceeds to name several issue numbers of Groo that he has not yet checked for my letter). Right? My guess is #29. I have a feeling that that's the best I can do right now, so the October 15 deadline may not be necessary.

By the way, I'll see if Heather wants to be Fantazine's official mascot... Did you see the last Game Informer? They called her SHEENA. The bastards!

Well, time to close. Good luck with school and all!

Russ Perry Jr.
Omro, WI

- I apologize for the mistakes in last issues interview, Russ, although there was nothing I could do about the Dethkorpz correct spelling other than to letter it by hand.

You'll notice that I took out some of your suggestions for colophon headings; this is cuz I plan on using them and didn't want to ruin the surprise. Don't worry, I'll give you credit for them. Surprisingly enough, I actually decided to play it straight in this issue's colophon - except for the fact that I looked everybodys' name up and wrote down the meaning (except for Brian, who I forgot about... sorry). Next issue the silly headers return.

Dear Pat,

Your fourth issue was good as usual. I especially liked the interview with Russ Perry Jr., Tim's Intimidator column, and Jessworld. The "Last Page Retaliation" was well-said too - I personally don't care either way - I want

games that are fun to play, not filled with blood and other sensationalistic crap. Why the watered down "In My Opinion"? Not even half a page... are you losing it? MJ Lesnick writes pages of opinion columns.

I hope you like #4 of Counterpoint!, and thanks for the review. Talk to you soon. Ta!

Paige
Kentwood, MI

- I've already told several people that I feel that our last issue was pretty weak, moreso on looks than anything else, but I was disappointed in myself for the shrunken "In My Opinion" too. I liked your politic column, but I don't think I can use it in this issue - I'm not sure how far I want to branch from games, even though I agree with most of what you say; I'm sure somebody else would run it.

Dear Pat,

I appreciate the issue of Fantazine that you sent me. Unfortunately, I had no use for it whatsoever so I threw it away as soon as my eyes set their sights on it.

Terribly sorry to waste such a nice work like that. I had (nor have) any idea why I did such a silly thing as to throw it away so suddenly and for such lack of reason.

In return for the issue that you so thoughtfully sent me of your... paper stapled together, I have so graciously sent you one of my little steel-bound papyrus products. I hope that you enjoy it as much as I enjoyed yours.

Tim Johnson
Editor, Blip!

- It must be the name.



MISTER SANTULLI

Pat,

Fantazine was great. My favorite (besides the usual high standard art) was the column about being a superhero. If I were running FANTasmagoria this issue you would've gotten the 100% WEIRD AWARD. I hope you continue to run that column, it's good stuff. You'll notice FANTasmagoria is absent, that's partly due to the fact that I've been mimicked by Counterpoint, in the "Fandom Paige". I don't like being imitated, but I'm a good sport - I'll just change it again. There's plenty of ideas up my sleeve.

Actually, I'm thinking about dropping FANTasmagoria altogether. I sometimes wonder if we really NEED to put fanzine reviews in fanzines. Faneds make up about 10% of my subscriber base, and I get consistently low scores for the fanzine content on my reader polls (sent out at re-subscription time). My PAYING customers aren't interested. What would you do? I'm torn here, because I really want to promote fandom... there must be another way...

Okay that wraps it up for me. Mad Dog McCree just came out for the 3DO and I'm muddling through it. Have you had the chance to play/buy the system yet? It's a great machine, I just hope it catches on. Talk to you soon, Pat!

Yours (DIGITALLY)
Joe Santulli
Ed, Digital Press

- Hmmm... the issue of fanzine reviews in fanzines is always a tough one. On the one hand, I know that Fantazine wouldn't be nearly as widespread as it is today if it weren't for the reviews in other 'zines, yours included. I mean, four reviews by Arnie Katz got me NO paying readers - hardly even any new fanzine trades. On the other hand, you want to keep your readers happy, and if only 10% are faneds, I guess I can't complain too loudly if you dropped your FANTasmagoria column, even though it's the first place I turn when a new issue arrives. No 3DO yet, but it does look impressive.

NOT RPGs

BY TABITHA PAIGE

There are very few true RPGs on the market these days. By my last count there were 2 that fit the description for the Genesis, and maybe 1 for SNES. Now, before you jump me screaming "What about Phantasy Star 2 + 3, Sword of Vermillion, Final Fantasy 2, Soul Blazer, Zelda, Shining in the Darkness, etc. etc.!!?", allow me to explain myself.

Back in the days of my leisurely youth in California, I was an avid player of role-playing games like AD+D (I'm talking the paper and dice version). For me, a few hours of Final Fantasy 2 is good solid fun, but I don't consider it to be a role-playing game, not by my definition. Of course, if you wanted to get really technical, you could say that nearly all video games are RPGs. In Sonic the Hedgehog you take the role of a blue critter, in SFII you assume the role of any one of a dozen characters.

No, no, no! To me, role-playing is building a character from scratch. Choosing each party member's stats, alignment, class, and race. Giving your character a unique personality, like the old AD+D games on C-64 let you do by choosing each character's face and battle icon, all the way down to the little details like hair color, type of outfit and weapon, and, most importantly, gender. We'd spend hours just preparing our party for the game - for me that was one of the best parts; I was always making new characters.

You see, in games like Phantasy Star or Zelda, you're forced to take the role of a specific character or party. They look like the programmers want them to look, not you. Sure, you can change their names, but an obviously male lead character named Tabitha is probably better left undone. And yes, you can dictate what they're equipped with, but you really don't connect as completely with them as you do with characters that are an extension of yourself.

I like the option of having a party consisting completely of evil amazon ninjas if I want, and the ability to have literally hundreds of party combinations appeals to me.

In case you're wondering, Might + Magic and AD+D are the two Genesis RPGs in existence. I'm not sure about Dungeon Master for SNES, but it looks to be the closest. Next time you say "RPG", think about this first.

IN MY OPINION

THE "HOW TO START YOUR OWN FANZINE" EDITION BY PAT REYNOLDS

Do you want to start a fanzine of your own? Are you having trouble getting off the drawing board or don't know where to start? Let me help you. Publishing a fanzine is supposed to be a fun hobby, as there is no other incentive to do it, other than because you enjoy it. You will NOT make money, your fanzine will NOT grow into a national magazine (not that some faneds don't try), and you probably won't get a job in the gaming industry because of your involvement.

For those of you who may be unfamiliar with what exactly a fanzine is (this is one of the first issues of Fantazine to be sold over the counter at VGU Video Games in Grand Rapids, Flint, and Lansing, so those of you who got it there should pay close attention to this column for a better understanding of what fanzines are), I'll tell you. The term fanzine itself is short for fan-published magazine. The word "zine" is often used in reference to fanzines. There are all kinds of fanzines for all kinds of hobbies, from sci-fi to comics to video gaming. The fanzine you hold in your hands is a part of what is known as Electronic Gaming Fandom, which is made up by all of the other EG fanzines and their readers. The purpose of fanzines is to spread your ideas and communicate with others about your hobby. Fanzines are basically long letters about a variety of subjects, opinions, and suggestions, meant only to entertain, to spark discussion, and yes, even to say things that the magazines can't, like "T*HQ sucks".

I should tell you, that while publishing a fanzine is a load of fun, it is also a lot of hard work. There are too many faneds (that's short for fanzine editors) who get all fired up, put out an issue or two, then lose steam and disappear. You need to make a commitment to the zine, as well as your readers. Unless you plan to only do a couple of issues, don't bother starting if you can't stay with it. However, being a faned gets harder with each passing issue. As you pick up contributors, gain readers, and receive constructive criticism about your 'zine, you will be forced to lengthen the fanzine, and make improvements with every issue. To this day, there is no perfect fanzine. Every faned is constantly improving his work with each issue; working to weed out the occasional typo, and to finally achieve that elusive perfect layout.

Okay, now that you understand the concept of fanzines and fandom, you need to know how to start. A title is a good first step. You want something that will characterize your fanzine, and make it original. You want a name you can be proud of. Before I started selling Fantazine at VGU, I hadn't really given much

thought to the fact that its' title really has NOTHING to do with videogaming. Since my intention at the outset was not to sell my 'zine locally, but to remain within the borders of EG fandom, this wasn't a problem. Lots of 'zines have titles that give no indication of their content; Paradox, In Between The Lines, Project: Ignition, Counterpoint!, Uproar, and the list goes on. At any rate, your title should be creative, and reflect yourself.

Next, choose subject matter. Will you stick mainly to gaming? If so, which systems will you cover? What should your ratio of reviews to other articles and columns be? Will you include off-subject material such as comics, movies, or music? There are no correct answers to these questions, although your final product will determine how far you will go in fandom.

In laying out your first issue, there are some important rules that every faned should adhere to. First, include a colophon (that's that sidebar inside the front page with all the subscription info, address, and silly jokes). Without this, some faneds might not have the patience to dig around through the fanzine to find your address, as I've had to do on occasion. Second, leaving the bottom half of the back cover blank allows you to fold the 'zine and staple it, therefore lowering the cost of mailing.

Now, when you finally have your first issue ready, and have made all of the big decisions like what the price will be, whether or not to have cover art, etc. you need to start a mailing list. The best place to start is by picking up a couple issues of Electronic Games magazine, which has the best fanzine coverage in any professional magazine. Start by sending your fanzine to all the other fanzines listed in Amie Katz's Fandom Central column, and send Amie a copy as well. This will begin to get your name around in fandom. It'll take awhile, probably a month or two before you start to see reviews of your 'zine in other fanzines and maybe even in EG too. These reviews, depending on how kind they are, will get you interest, mainly in the way of more fanzines requesting trades. ALWAYS trade with your fellow faneds, as you will not only begin to make friends, but now have the opportunity to be reviewed even more in these fanzines. Also, refusing trade offers can get you a bad reputation if you do it too often, and then you'll be forced to rely mainly on subscribers for support and readership.

Finally, after about 6 or 7 months, when you've put out a few issues and established your name in fandom, don't forget those other faneds who helped you get to where you are. Fandom is occasionally disgraced by guys who become well-known because they get glowing praise from other 'zines, only to turn their backs on those who helped them to the top because they feel that they have become better than the rest of fandom. These guys will realize after awhile that they can't go on forever without anyone singing their praises anymore and will eventually fade away. I plan on staying around for awhile, and leaving with a bang, and I look forward to seeing your fanzine soon.

IN MY OPINION

BY MARK ALLEN

I don't go to arcades much. When I met Pat he asked if I'd ever seen Street Fighter II and I said no. That should give you a notion of the frequency of my token dropping.

I used to play in arcades constantly. I love Tempest, Pac-Man, Red Baron, Galaga, Gyruss, Pole Position, Donkey Kong, Mappy and Mat Mania. Those were simpler times.

My happy nostalgic arcade world was raped and pillaged before I left Grand Rapids. Pat, Lori the wife and I decided to visit a Chuck E. Cheese. I had a fond memory of a Chuck E. Cheese filled with video games and a few kiddy game diversions. When I entered Chuck E. Cheese circa 1993, I thought I'd entered an alternate world.

Before me was a cavernous dining room with a side room for the dog and pony show. That was not what I noticed first, but I'm setting a scene here. Huddled on one wall were the standard complement of kiddy diversions and FOUR video games. When Pat arrived we agreed to sally forth to his house for Little Caesars and gaming. What a sorry establishment Mr. Cheese is mascotting! He wants me to jump into a pit of balls!?! At my age that would lead to an advanced state of regurgitation.

As if that weren't enough, I walked into an arcade in Mattoon (I live in Eldorado if anyone wants to crash) that had 2 token stickers on crappy stuff like SFII, Terminator II, that baseball game with the funky batting control and a home run derby and other games they shouldn't ought to be on. In my day, 50 cents was for technology like Dragon's Lair.

I realize 25 cents is a bargain, so token machines should give 3 for \$1. Or games could cost 35 cents and give change. SFII wouldn't even give my token back when I realized it took two.

This makes me long for the days when Galaxian and Tempest could be kicked until the alarm went off and a free game was given, and our local junior college where stood a Donkey Kong with the front plexiglass gone so credits could be accessed by reaching in and flipping the switch. Arcade boys better watch out for me.

I've seen an ad for the second Ranma 1/2 tape but can't find the first anywhere! It should be out by now, so look for it. The comic is coming along nicely, with book 2 nearing its completion. Shampoo has finally shown up, and she wants to kill Ranma female and marry Ranma male... what a love triangle that makes!

Did I see an Outlanders video at Argos? I did, I did! Johji Manabe's one of Japan's favorite manga creators and I can't wait to catch this one. For a gander at some of Johji's work, pick up a copy of Caravan Kidd, currently running through book 2 under the Viz logo.

Last time I was in Suncoast Video (with Jess Ragan, no less) I noted a couple daring releases into the US market. How do the titles Devilman and Ultimate Teacher strike you? Those crazy japs and their titles! Ultimate Teacher looked like a very strange hybrid of learning skills and SFII... hmmm. Of course, this is from the people who make video games about graduating high school and living with AIDS and write comics about everything from fishing to baseball. I also noted that several prices had dropped since my last visit, including Castle of Cagliostro (\$14.99 and a GREAT movie) and the Zillion series. You SMS buffs will surely recognize Zillion; The Tri-formation was the first SMS game I bought.

Finally, Masamune Shirows' Dominion has been released both dubbed and subtitled, in 2 two episode tapes. Manga and anime fans will recognize Appleseed creator Masamune's distinct style and vision, and I strongly recommend that you pick up the subtitled versions to get the full impact of the original voices. Support Anime - buy something today!

ANIME!!!

BY PAT REYNOLDS

Anime (for those of you unsure, it's pronounced "aneemay") has taken the US by storm of late, and dozens of new titles appear each month. Here's a look at some of the latest I've gotten my hands on.

Last issue I mentioned Urutsoki Doji as an untranslated Japan-only movie which I felt had no hope of seeing the light of day in America. As with Ranma 1/2 for SNES, I was wrong again. Anime 18 has picked this one up and is releasing it in two parts, dubbed in English. Although I noticed that some of the more hardcore bits are absent, this is still one of the more explicit pieces of animation around. Want to totally change someone's views of animated movies being kiddy stuff? Show them this one, just keep Mom and Dad out of the room. On a related note, Anime 18 is also releasing the Urutsoki Doji "perfect collection", an uncensored, unedited version. Cool! Heh heh heh.

Battle Angel has just been released, subtitled, in a two-episode tape. Viz has been translating the comic, but it appears that they've also been very liberal with the original character's names; in fact nearly all of the names are different in the comic than in the video. Aside from that initial shock, BA is a very good action tale about a Hunter Warrior (bounty hunters who have replaced the police because criminals are just too dangerous) named Ido who builds a cyborg girl named Gally (Alita in the US comic). She decides to become a HW herself, and it turns out that she's got a ton of power in her 14-year old looking bod.

The Guyver, or Bio-booster Battle Armor Guyver, is out, too, in 3 (so far) two-episode volumes. Pete, Adrian and I rented the first tape, and it turned out to be a great action flick. Lots of blood and death, with the standard big creature battles and an awesome main character. The Guyver is a biological suit of armor that joins with a human to create the perfect fighting machine. We all noted the horrid voice actors US Renditions hired for the dubbing, though... flashbacks to the intro to Final Fight CD.

THE GRIPEES OF WRATH

BY ADRIAN "JOURGENSEN" PROCTOR

I am just sick to fucking death of the way fighting games are programmed to have the computer get the fucking upper hand all the time! They give the computer WAY too many advantages over the player such as: how often have you been able to beat a CPU opponent to a kick or even a throw in **SFII**? Huh? I didn't fucking think so! And what about Guile, huh? He chucks those damn Sonic Booms one after another!! Then that filthy bastard has the nerve to gallop over to you and **POW** wack you in the face with his god forsaken somersault kick like a total dumbass. You KNOW no one can do that shit with Guile! How about those other characters, huh? Try torpedoing at Ken for the sake of fuck! Halfway through **SHWAK!** with a dragon punch!

Have you played **Fatal Fury 2**? What's up with this? Where did they find the programmers? The psychic network? I mean, the second you do the joystick motion for an attack you're getting a big fireball in the face! They counterattack WAY too much!

World Heroes 2 has some of the shoddiest programming ever. Like the aforementioned fighting games the characters aren't programmed with the limitations that the player-controlled character has. On top of that, though, they added the ability to bounce back fireballs and counter throws. Every projectile I threw in the game came back at me along with the throws! Every one! Why can't there be a good fighting game that doesn't cheat dammit!

More gripes! What's up with Sega?! I like the Genesis, don't get me wrong, but why program the system with such limitations as 64 colors?! On top of that the system doesn't have hardware scaling... Big Mistake! Why didn't they bother with that? Every arcade game they make scales - that's all they do!! And they don't bother to do it with their home system?! Now about the Sega CD. What happened to the amazing games they promised? The system even with the CD is still 16-bit. I thought with the other 16-bit processor it would become a 3DO and yet there STILL isn't a very impressive game that makes me want to shell out the dough for a Sega CD and I say "Pat, it's not too late to sell yours and get your \$300 back. Look at those DAMN CD games! They could be done on SNES!

Sega makes me angry sometimes! It took them 3 years to realize their system could do more than make generic monochrome games with dinky sprites. It actually took a licensee to make a game that shows the Genesis has the potential to kick ass. The game is **Gunstar Heroes**. That reminds me, have you ever talked to those bozos who work at Sega? They have

the nerve to justify their primitive viewpoints and they really believe their sound chip is better than than the Super Nintendo's!! Yeah right! Warning: be prepared when you call Sega to take an earful of BS about the superiority of their system, blast processing, and all their new games that will put Super N to shame... yeah right! The only way you guys will make a superior game is if you crank out the dough and supe up your cartridges to keep up!!

OOH!! Fighting games!! SEGA!! DAMN!! And speed metal!! I love the stuff but I hate to think how the groups that made the genre acceptable are changing their sound!!! I HATE Metallica's new album to the bottom of my **ANGRY HEART!!!** Speed is slowing down!! What's next, Metallica unplugged!?!

ARRGH!! Things haven't been right since **BRUCE LEE DIED!!** WHY DID HE HAVE TO DIE!?!
WE'RE STUCK WITH SEAGAL NOW!!!
WHY WON'T HE DIE!! AAAIIGH!! I'M
LOSING MY MIIIND! I'VE GOTTA
GUN!! DON'T TRY TO STOP ME
OR I'LL SHOOT!! NO!
AAARRGH!



ATARI LORD

BY MARK ALLEN

5200 top ten!?! Excellence certainly may not be in plenty when ten games are selected from a library of 25, but we'll see how it goes. Keep in mind that I don't have Space Dungeon, which from what I hear would be included in a top ten out of 26.

1. DEFENDER (Atari) - What a game! Graphics and sound are presented straight from the arcade. The action is just as fast and furious. The control is perfect: lower button fire, upper button smart bomb, keypad hyperspace, and movement done by joystick.

2. BERZERK (Atari) - This is intense. Even includes the arcade voice and synthesis. The speech pitch of the voices correlate, lower tunes going slower. But hey! This is late 70's computer technology here. Getting killed means hearing the frying noise and Evil Otto's taunts. As Pat said, "That's brutal."

3. STAR RAIDERS (Atari) - This was a famous 400/800 game when it was translated. This is a long space game using the controllers to their limits. I remember my excitement when I first got Star Commander First Class. It seems so easy now.

4. PAC-MAN (Atari) - Pac-Man achieved pack-in status by the time I got my \$90 5200. Another computer game, the maze is squashed but intact and all the intermissions are present. An excellent game.

5. MISSILE COMMAND (Atari) - Computer translation, what else is new, good game, etc. etc.

6. MONTEZUMA'S REVENGE (Parker Bros.) - This adventure game is funny now, but involved at the time. Finishing it and exploring the levels was time consuming fun.

7. RIVER RAID (Activision) - Souped up version of the 2600 classic. Start on level 50; ouch!

8. SOCCER (Atari) - Kind of slow, but a lot of fun action/sports type deal. The ball is a swirling mass of dots. Pretty neat.

9. COUNTERMEASURE (Atari) - One of the few 5200 originals. This is a cool tank action/strategy game. Combines excellent graphics and sound into a unique package.

10. QIX (Atari) - A translation of the Taito arcade game. More strategy than action. The outstanding graphics come from the swirling Qix creature. Strange fun.

Atari has done rather better than I reckoned. Robotron and Dig Dug were left out. But 10 is 10, and even my poor math skills can't change that.

ARA'S PICKS

BY ARA SHIRINIAN

SUPER CASTLEVANIA IV (SNES) - A masterpiece from Konami. Combine an eerie and ominous soundtrack with perfect gameplay, outstanding graphics and effects, and an enormously long game and you get the fourth installment in the Castlevania series. Absolutely flawless.

AXELAY (SNES) - Another near-perfect game. The BGM is awesome. The graphics are truly revolutionary, and learning how to properly use the weapons does take a moderate amount of technique even though this is a shooter. Even after beating it countless numbers of times, Axelay is still a blast.

VIRTUA RACING (Arcade) - I had probably spent oh maybe a few THOUSAND dollars on this one (and counting). The experience is simply exhilarating. Lots of strategy is required and playing against 4+ players is endless fun. Hopefully it won't get chopped up too much when it comes to the Genesis.

M.U.S.H.A. (Genesis) - Yes, it's a little old, but MUSH A is nevertheless a great game from those shooter masters at Compile (makers of Zanac, Blazing Lasers, etc...). Extremely frantic and intense gameplay make MUSH A a difficult game to top. Even with today's high standards, MUSH A is still one of the all-time best.

PARODIUS (Super Famicom) - Awesome, awesome, awesome!!! If you only import one game in your lifetime, this has got to be the one. Modeled after the Gradius series, Parodius has lots of hilarious, cutesy animations (but don't let that turn you off) as well as goofy renditions of famous classical music compositions as some of the BGM. Each stage is filled with lots of subtle animations that keep you coming back for more. 7 difficulty settings make Parodius for players of all skill levels.

Ys SERIES (Duo) - Anyone who is even slightly into RPG has got to try this epic adventure. The BGM and speech is still one of the best around. Ys has bad guys who just love to hate, and it makes the storyline that much better. Although Ys III was a bit too short (okay, it's VERY short), it was no doubt excellent. Play these very loud on your stereo.

HERZOG ZWEI (Genesis) - Here's one of those sleeper titles that never really got the recognition it deserves. Either way, the theme is VERY original, and the 2-player vs. option is where HZ really shines. DO go out of your way to play a round with a friend.

TO PLAY OR NOT TO PLAY

The system of the month for this issue is the Genesis! Yes, after months and months of absolutely nothing great, this system has been reborn! Gunstar Heroes is a serious contender for Game of the Year in my book, and Aladdin and Landstalker both do revolutionary things for their genres. SNES has ONE great title to look at this issue, with a handful of mediocrity. Oh, yeah, and last month's game of the issue, Samurai Shodown, was accidentally overlooked so I've included that game here too. Onward!

GUNSTAR HEROES	SEGA
ACTION	GENESIS
1 OR 2 PLAYERS	AVERAGE
GRAPHICS: 9	CONTROL: 9
SOUND: 9	FUN: 10
OVERALL: 9	

Treasure, the development house full of refugees from Konami who defected to Sega, is aptly named indeed. Gunstar Heroes had me constantly looking at my Genesis to confirm that, indeed, that's where these graphics were coming from. This game is proof that Genesis owners have been dealt a raw deal for three years. Sure, there have been great games, but this is evidence that they could have been better!

Gunstar Heroes is a lot like Contra, but with greater originality and much better options. For example, at the outset you can choose whether you want a character who can fire and run at the same time, or one who has to remain still to shoot, but has better control over the 360 degree range of firing. I found that the fixed fire option worked better for me, because there's so much going on that if you need to move around to accurately aim your weapon you'll get hit a lot more often. Also, four basic weapons can be combined with one another for a wide variety of super weapons. Grab chaser and rapid and you'll get rapid chaser, or just get two of a kind for a more powerful version of that weapon.

Technique is important here as well.

Aside from the usual run and gun action, the heroes can jump kick or belly flop on enemies, slide, and block unfriendly fire. They also climb like monkeys, jump off walls, and can grab opponents and throw them into walls or other baddies. They can even throw each other into the enemy! These are versatile guys.

The main bad guy is an M. Bison look-alike with a mean streak and an evil laugh. You face off with him several times throughout the game, but he's probably the least impressive of all the bosses you'll come up against. Especially unbelievable is level two's Seven Force - a huge robot that transforms up to seven times depending on the difficulty level. On normal, fighting off five of his forms is one of the most intense battles ever seen on ANY system.

Then there's Black's Dice Maze, where you roll dice to move across a board game - the only catch is that each stop is a boss fight!!! Luckily there are "happy item rooms" to replenish your health and change weapons.

I could go on about all the scaling, rotation, and other amazing effects to be found in Gunstar, but I don't want to ruin all the surprises for those who have yet to play this game. Absolutely the best Genesis game ever released in terms of overall impression. Wow. Gunstar Heroes does for the action genre what SFII did for fighting games.

- Pat Reynolds

SAMURAI SHODOWN	SNK
FIGHTING	NEO GEO
1 OR 2 PLAYERS	HARD
GRAPHICS: 8	CONTROL: 8
SOUND: 9	FUN: 8
OVERALL: 8	

SNK's Neo Geo is fast becoming known for its large assortment of fighting games; indeed, of all the companies to capitalize on the success of SFII, they are the ones who really

have taken the idea and run with it - and they're still going. We've seen Fatal Fury (and its sequel), World Heroes (and its sequel), Art of Fighting (sequel in the works), and now comes Samurai Shodown. Fortunately, instead of just rehashing the already overused techniques of the genre as they've done in the aforementioned titles, they actually worked up a whole new idea. I'm discounting the horrid Time Killers as introducing the concept of weapon fighting. Samurai Shodown is set in feudal Japan for the most part, only a small number of the fighters are from elsewhere.

The characters manage to take on personalities from their phrases and animation, one of the things that made SFII such a big hit. SS also introduces several new features, such as the ability of every character to run at his/her opponent, and the defensive ability to jump back very quickly. There's also a POW meter that builds up as you get hit, until your character turns red and does mega damage for a few seconds.

Graphically, this is SNK's best game yet. The animation is very well done and the backgrounds are incredible.

The sounds are what really set SS apart from the crowd. The metal on metal clanging of weaponry and patter of charging feet lend great depth to the play experience.

You have three weapon attacks and three kicks per character, plus the usual repertoire of special moves, some of which are actually unique, such as the animal attacks of two fighters, and Genon's poison cloud.

It's obvious that a lot of work went into this game, and that the designers wanted something that stood on its own and didn't simply leech off of SFII's popularity. I'm glad to say that Samurai Shodown succeeds more than any of their previous attempts.

- Pat Reynolds

SUPER OFF ROAD: THE BAJA	
TRADEWEST	
DRIVING	SNES
1 PLAYER	AVERAGE
GRAPHICS: 8	CONTROL: 6
SOUND: 7	FUN: 6
OVERALL: 6	

HAUNTING	ELECTRONIC ARTS
ACTION	GENESIS
1 OR 2 PLAYERS	EASY
GRAPHICS: 8	CONTROL: 8
SOUND: 8	FUN: 7
OVERALL: 8	

We all remember the original Super Off Road - a great four player arcade machine with a unique full-track view and lots of bumps and hills. It even made a decent conversion on the SNES, not to mention several other home systems.

Tradewest decided to take a big risk and abandon the tried and true formula for their sequel. Instead of the above the track, multi-player approach, what we get in Baja is a behind the truck, one player, mode seven in excess off road bonanza.

SO: TB is endorsed by Ivan Stewart, which is about the only similarity one can draw between the sequel and the original. Ivan gives you advice before each leg of the cross-peninsula race. Unfortunately, much of his advice makes him look like a real idiot. He actually told me to "Keep all wheels on the road and go fast. Avoid hitting things which will damage your truck." Whoa. No wonder he's a pro.

The graphics are standard mode seven fare - choppy scrolling and really big pixels define the terrain over which you must control your official Toyota Baja buggy. The control is over-responsive, especially since you're supposed to be driving on rough dirt road most of the time. Also incredibly annoying are the thousands of dirt bikers and quad riders you're supposed to avoid (you lose \$ for each one you kill). However, because of the sloppy control and the abundance of hills, you either don't see these unfortunate vacationers before it's too late or simply can't get out of their way. Suffice it to say, after about ten minutes of trying to avoid them, I gave up and went out of my way to hit each and every one! What the hell are they doing out there anyway!?!

Since Rock N' Roll Racing came out at about the same time as this game, and is a much better driver, I'd say that SO: TB is a decent rental, if only to see how different it is from the original. Oh, yeah, and what's up with the "Arriba!" every time you go over a hill. I've heard more excited sounding prostate patients!

- Pat Reynolds

One of my memories of childhood was of my brother and I waiting for our mom in the car outside a store. An old lady walked in front of our parked car, and my brother looked at me and said "How high do you think she'd jump if I honked the horn?" Well, we didn't actually do it, but everybody has a mean streak that just wants out in order to scare the crap out of people. That's why we love Halloween and go on rollercoasters. It's why people make horror movies and Stephen King is a multi-millionaire.

Electronic Arts has delivered a game that let's you live out the fantasy of scaring the pants off (literally) of a family of four. The background story is about a skateboarder who dies while riding on a poorly made board. The dead skater, now known as Polterguy, hunts down the owner of the company that manufactured the faulty board and sets out to make his (and his families) life a living nightmare.

Polterguy chases Vito Sardini, his wife Flo, and their bratty kids Mimi and Tony through each room of four increasingly bigger houses. His mission is to drive the family, one at a time, out of each mansion. This is accomplished by possessing certain items in each room to perform an otherworldly deed. There are hundreds of these "fright 'ems" in the game; you could literally play all the way through Haunting every day for a month and still not see them all. These "fright 'ems" are the highlight of the game. Polterguy jumps in and out of pieces of furniture, doors, and dozens of other items at your command. Most of the time this causes the item to shake, which attracts the interest of whichever family member is in the room, who will walk over to investigate. Some are automatic, and go off as soon as you leap into them, and others are controllable, like a floating skull or a

bloody, crawling hand. You can turn lights off, make a dresser eat Tony's pet hamster and spit out the gory remains, or fill the bathtub with blood. Possess a chainsaw and chase Vito around the garage, or unleash a barrage of enchanted china on Flo in the kitchen. Some effects are humorous, others are downright gross, like the image of Vito being beheaded or the hand that has its fingers cut off. Some are combinations of both, like the basketball player who rises up from the couch to rip his own head off and toss it across the room for a three pointer.

The effects of your haunting on the Sardini's are almost as much fun to watch as the supernatural shows themselves. Vito and Flo drop their pants, jump out of their clothes, and scream convincingly. Mimi falls on the floor and pounds on it with her fists, and Tony literally blows his top. Both kids frequently wet their pants and all four quake with fear.

There are two flaws in this otherwise very original and humorous game. First, the repetitive nature of the play will undoubtedly turn some people away. I like to play through it to try to find "fright 'ems" I missed before, but I will admit that after awhile the novelty wears thin. Second, Haunting is very easy. There are ecto beasts which pop up from time to time and you can fight them off, but I never saw the need. You are basically invulnerable in the house. The only places you can be hurt are the dungeons, where you must go if you run out of ecto, which keeps you in the material world. I breezed through the game in a day, although the final battle against a weird monster is very tough.

Electronic Arts deserves credit for breaking away from conventional game types and creating an original game. The ending promises a sequel, which, if the minor flaws I've mentioned are accounted for and cleared up, should prove interesting. Haunting is a great visual game, and just in time for Halloween too.

- Pat Reynolds

PRIVATEER	ORIGIN
SPACE COMBAT	IBM
1 PLAYER	AVERAGE
GRAPHICS: 10	CONTROL: 8
SOUND: 8	FUN: 8
OVERALL: 9	

By far the best Origin game I have ever had the joy of playing, Privateer combines action with some strategy. You are able to choose which path in a pilots life to take. In Privateer, that's of an evil pirate, a friendly trader, or a mercenary living off anothers death.

One nice improvement over the Wing Commander games is that you can equip your ship with whatever options you want. Lasers, cannons, Plasma rays, missiles, torpedos, jump-drive and a slew of others.

The graphics are excellent, except when extremely close up to another ship. The control is a little better than WC2 and there is more dimension to the galaxy as you know it. It's more than one jump point; there are at least 100 which must be travelled in order to reach the planet in desperate need of Playthings (tm) magazine, or to track down the evil pirate who is preying off of innocent merchants.

You start off in the old clunker that your father left you (with a few tricks left in it) and by saving your well-earned credits can end up with the sleek Centurion fighter. But that depends on your needs... for instance, if you follow the life of a trader you will want a ship with a bigger cargo hold than the bounty hunter's Centurion. If playing a pirate I would recommend the Orion for its strong armor to protect you from all the bounty hunters after your head.

This game is well worth the money and everyone with a good enough computer should have it. The graphics are stunning and with the speech packs the voices are great.

There are several things I can see problems with, however. One is that the enemies on an individual scale are too easy to kill. They always use the same tactics over and over again. Also the game is very long and complex; not that I like simple games, no, not at all, it just seems like it's gonna take me forever to beat it. And that's the last thing - either I'm missing something or they never say... what's the point of the game? Do

you just go around killing and making money (which is cool) or what?

Oh well, it's still a cool game.

- Pete Foote

GRANZORT	HUDSONSOFT
ACTION	SUPERGRAFX
1 OR 2 PLAYERS	AVERAGE
GRAPHICS: 8	CONTROL: 9
SOUND: 7	FUN: 8
OVERALL: 8	

GranZort was touted as the sequel to Kieth Courage by E-G-Screw-M a few years ago. They did, of course, get the name wrong, it's not "King of the Mountain". Anyway, enough about a magazine which, over the years, has declined from respectability to mediocrity (shameless and indirect insult).

If I could read Japanese I would tell you the plot, but I can't, so I won't.

Visually, GranZort holds its own against games like Zardion and Cybernator. You will find actual parallax scrolling (too cool). All the enemies are imaginative and interesting. In fact, if you look carefully you will notice each enemy represents an animal. Did I mention you can control 3 characters (a la Valis III)? Let's see, there is a sword wielding robot, a stretch-o robot (reminiscent of Bionic Commando), and an archer. Of course, if they borrowed that idea (from Valis III) they also took the different "magic" idea. Each robo-dude has his own "magic spell" (i.e. the archer can levitate, Sword-dude has a screen nuke). Sound is sufficient, nothing too fancy.

I can see where this could be the sequel to Alpha Zones (you must get to the core of a planet), and if it is, GranZort does the AZ justice; if not it's still great.

-Tyrone Rodriguez

THE GUARDIAN LEGEND	
HUDSON SOFT	
SHOOTER/RPG	NES
1 PLAYER	HARD
GRAPHICS: 9	CONTROL: 9
SOUND: 6	FUN: 8
OVERALL: 8	

Have you ever walked into a local department store, seen a game that kinda' sparked your interest, saw the \$19.99 price tag and said "what the hell?" You took the thing home, played it a little and decided that it was one of the best games you'd ever played? That's what happened here.

When I think of Hudson, I think Adventure Island (URP), but this goes above and beyond 90% of the shooters the NES has.

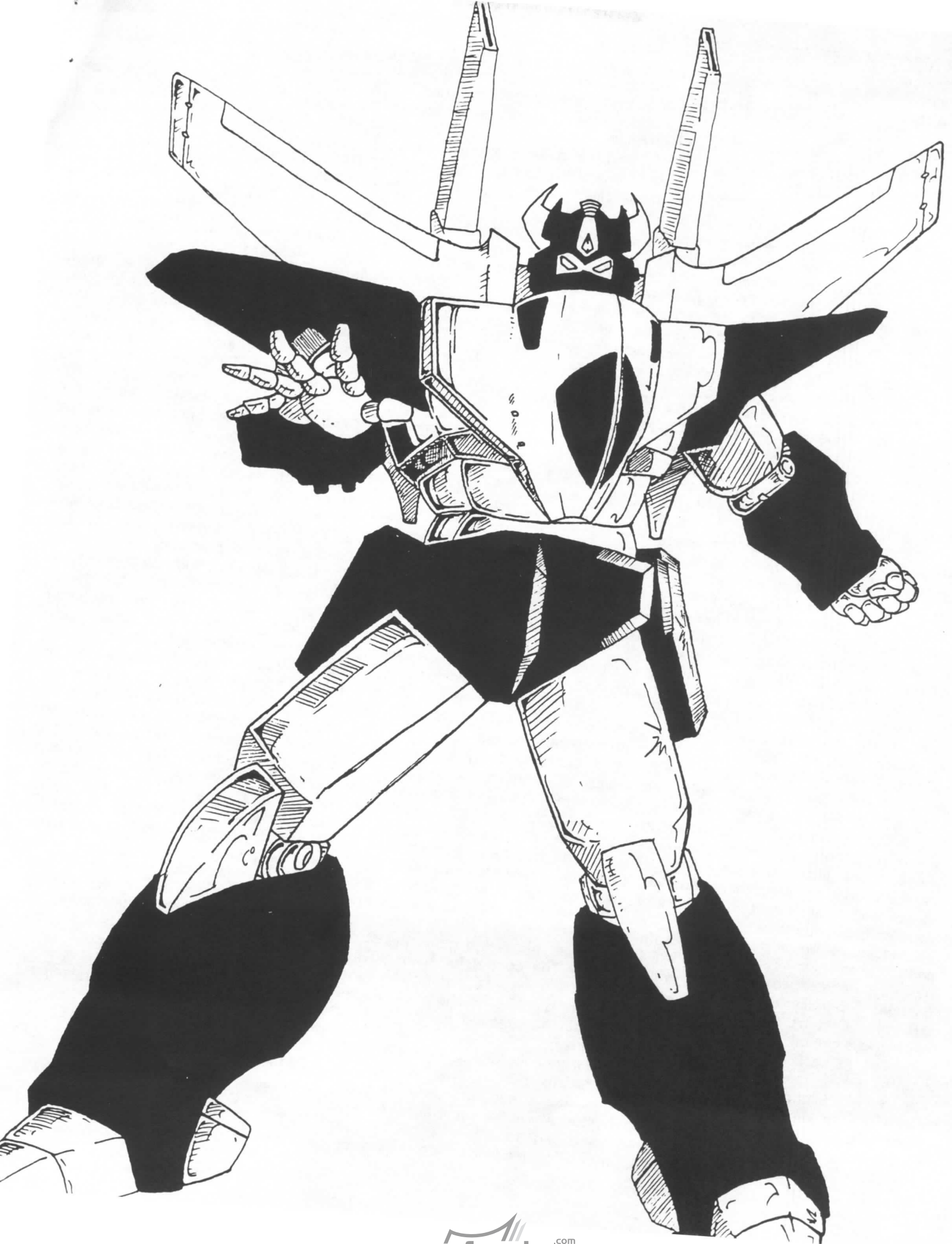
As far as the game goes, you are the Guardian Legend and a ship capable of transforming into a mighty robot. Your mission; to fly to a vast space station and find out why everyone was killed. The pisser is that you have to run around the station as a robot looking for the lairs of main bosses and collecting weapons, power-ups, and hit points, hence the RPG angle. This part of the game does tend to grate on you, but it's damn worth it when you see your little guy transform and blast into some of the most intense shooting action in the world!

The action is almost too fast for your eyes to follow and the bosses don't have any indication that they are dying! You just keep shooting until they explode! And the way some of these suckers look, UGH! It's a good thing you have (don't quote me, it's been awhile) 20 extra weapons! Some work while you're a robot, but most are used for fighter mode. Whatever the price of this humdinger is now it's worth the green you're throwin' down. If you don't buy it at least rent it; this can't be missed!

- Rich Plummer

Oop! One last note... Play this game with the Advantage or another controller with turbo capabilities or you're askin' for a real kick in the pods! Good luck!!

The Guardian Legend illustration by Rich Plummer.



PINK GOES TO HOLLYWOOD	
TECMAGIK	
ACTION	SNES
1 PLAYER	HARD
GRAPHICS: 7	CONTROL: 6
SOUND: 8	FUN: 7
OVERALL: 6	

I must admit to being a huge fan of the Pink Panther when I was younger. And despite what many reviewers say about his mute nature detracting from his personality, I found Tecmagik's portrayal of the character to be very faithful to the original cartoon. I'd much rather play as Pink Panther than a bobcat that smirks "what could possibly go wrong?" 10 times in under a minute.

However, the thing that kills this game is the same that killed Bubsy - very poor control. This wouldn't be nearly as noticable if not for the fact that the game throws lots of pits at you, making precise jumping, which just isn't there, a must.

Graphically, the programmers attempted to match the look of the classic cartoon... and succeeded, giving the backgrounds an 8-bit look which is faithful to the show, but looks dreadfully out of place on the SNES. I did find some backgrounds which were very well-done, but on the whole there's really nothing special.

The main character is animated well, and sports the usual action game repotaire of moves: run, jump, climb, crouch. Pink Panther can spray enemies with "pink", which looks like bug spray. He also picks up "tricks", items that he holds, then sends off to wreak havoc on opponents. Although these tricks look different, they all basically do the same thing; bounce, roll, or walk in a straight line in front of you clearing out baddies.

Adding to the difficulty, besides the control, is the two-hit life ststem, which has Pink Panther wearing a hat, which changes depending on the stage, at full strength. One hit removes the hat, a second kills him off.

The game is not without its good points - a main action screen, apparently a kitchen, acts as a base of operations for you to choose your next stage. Go into the freezer and it's off to an ice stage. A ship in a bottle leads to "Pinkbeard", a pirate-themed adventure,

and so on. You also find tokens to drop into toll boxes found on each stage, which create one of several modes of transportation, such as bridges, stairs, a magic carpet, and an umbrella.

And the music is great - different variations of the familiar Pink Panther theme play in each stage and they're all very well-done.

Tecmagik deserves credit for resurrecting an old favorite, but I can't recommend a purchase in this case, and it only held my interst because of the subject matter, not the actual gameplay. Fans of the cartoon might want to check it out.

- Pat Reynolds

THE IMMORTAL	
ADVENTURE	EA
1 PLAYER	GENESIS
	HARD
GRAPHICS: 8	CONTROL: 6
SOUND: 8	FUN: 8
OVERALL: 8	

The Immortal is not so much a game as it is a variety of brilliant death scenes. This was the main reason I bought this game and I was not disappointed.

As a wizard-looking fighter, you must maneuver through dungeons, solving puzzles and avoiding traps.

This aspect of the game (Zaxxon perspective) works well. Some levels are real brain-teasers.

In the dungeons you must fight a variety of enemies. The fighting is really lame. You just dodge left and right until your opponent is tired, then hack away left and right.

The last blow in each fight is beautiful. There are many ways to kill your opponents and each is well animated with excellent graphics and sound.

The rest of the game is not as good. The control for both moving and fighting is sluggish and frustrating. The graphics and sound are not as detailed as in the fight scenes.

If you like death, then this is the game to buy. I've had guests shocked speechless and laughing hysterically at the same time. It's also not a bad adventure game. It gets frustrating and kind of boring between

the slaughter.

- Mark Allen

ALADDIN	
ACTION	SEGA
1 PLAYER	GENESIS
	AVERAGE
GRAPHICS: 9	CONTROL: 8
SOUND: 8	FUN: 7
OVERALL: 8	

What do you get when you combine a rather standard side-scrolling action game with flawless animation, great music and sound effects, and a popular Disney theme? Unfortunately, the answer is a rather standard side-scrolling action game that looks and sounds really good, but gives the player a mighty big feeling of deja vu.

You see, Aladdin, like Global Gladiators and Cool Spot, runs off of the same, or very similar, game engine Virgin developed a couple years ago. So, by varying the graphics and backgrounds, they are able to create essentially a new game from an old mold. Cool Spot was EXTREMELY similar to Global Gladiators, and thankfully Virgin made some adjustments with Aladdin. First, you fight with a sword and the tokens you collect actually have a purpose (other than getting you into bonus stages - you throw them at enemies). There are two bonus stages in Aladdin, and each is relatively easy to get to.

As for the actual game, it's good. I'd probably like it more if I wasn't so very tired of the same old same old in the action game genre. The animation and sounds can only carry the game so far, though, and once you strip that away you're left with a game that, once beaten, will probably occupy a spot on your back burner for a long time.

Die hard fans of Disney titles should find enough here to buy it, but gamers looking for a good action title would do better to pick up Gunstar Heroes.

-Pat Reynolds

SECRET OF MANA	
ACTION RPG	SQUARESOFT
1 TO 3 PLAYERS	SNES
	AVERAGE
GRAPHICS: 8	CONTROL: 8
SOUND: 9	FUN: 9
OVERALL: 9	

The SNES hasn't had a good Zelda -

EVIL IN ITS BLACKEST FORM HAS

BEEN RELEASED UNTO THE WORLD.

AND THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY

TO RESTORE PERFECT ORDER.

esque action RPG since, well, Zelda itself. Squaresoft has changed that, and Secret of Mana delivers the goods, and then some.

Originally a part of the legendary Final Fantasy series, Secret of Mana became it's own game somewhere along the line during development, and was released as a standalone title.

The real standout feature of this game is the multi-player option. Up to three characters can form your party, and each can be controlled by a human player, via the multitap. In a one or two player game, the computer handles the leftover character(s), although you can take over at any time, and set computer players level of aggression (from 16 settings).

The inventory is the best I've ever seen in a game of this type. By pressing the item button, you access a ring of items around your character. There are three rings initially - weapons, items, and options. By rotating the ring, you place the item, weapon, or option that you want in the cursor at the top of the ring and press a button to select it. Pressing up and down on the controller changes rings. It sounds complicated on paper, but trust me, this is the easiest menu system ever developed and it makes equipping weapons and using items a breeze. Later in the game two of the characters learn spells, which adds spell rings to their inventory; spells are cast the same way - by selecting them from the ring.

You begin the game with one character, the hero. He quickly finds the other two party members and the adventure begins.

Fighting is a bit different than Zelda. Your weapon has a % meter that refills from 0% each time you use it. So in order to do maximum damage you must wait for it to fill to 100% before each attack. Also, as your character gains experience his weapon skill rises and he attains the ability to utilize special attacks, which power-up after your weapon reaches 100%. By holding down the attack button an energy bar fills up, once for each attack level, and

the resulting attacks would make Link cringe.

Throughout the game you are awarded with weapon orbs, usually for defeating a boss. These orbs are then taken to a blacksmith you befriend early on and used to raise whichever weapon that orb is named for (axe orb, sword orb, etc.) to its next level of power. You also find the seeds of Mana, which make the sword of Mana more powerful and bring you closer to the end of your quest, which is, of course, to free the world from evil (so it's got a generic plot, it's still a great game).

Mana introduces the most hysterical method of travel ever - Cannon flying! Cannon Travel Centers can be found in various spots, and they give you the option to travel to specific locations. The resulting animation when engaged in Cannon travel is very funny; and a great use of mode 7 - your party is literally shot into the sky to fall to earth at the desired locale. Even funnier is when one or more of your characters lands on an enemy after cannon travelling - it actually does damage!

This is the best game of its type to be released for the SNES yet, beating out even Zelda for sheer fun value. RPG fans need this game in their collections.

- Pat Reynolds

DUNE 2	WESTWOOD
STRATEGY	IBM
1 PLAYER	AVERAGE
GRAPHICS: 9	CONTROL: 9
SOUND: 8	FUN: 8
OVERALL: 8	

Dune 2 is a futuristic Sci-fi strategy game that pits three armies against each other for control of the planet Arakas. The cruel and evil Harkonna house, the cunning mafia-like Ordos house, and the "good guys", the Artredees, all battle for control of the spice.

The gameplay is great. It's easy to give orders to your troops and they respond quickly to your commands. The music gives an eerie feeling which suddenly changes when a battle breaks out. The voices are so cool. Each time you select a unit it will respond with a "Yes, sir" or "Awaiting your orders" and once orders are given you hear a "movin' out".

There are lots of cool units like the

siege tank or a gun emplacement to guard your base. All of the better units are only available at the later portion of the game.

I really can't complain about much on this game. The only thing that annoys me is the slowdown on my 486 33mhz computer.

You don't even need to like the movie "Dune" to enjoy the game. So I do recommend it to you reader people out there. Remember to watch out for sandworms!

- Pete Foote

Rather than drag this review section out forever, I'm going to finish up with some shorter one number reviews. - Pat

YOSHI'S COOKIE	
BULLET-PROOF SOFTWARE	
PUZZLE	SNES
1 OR 2 PLAYERS	AVERAGE

A nice change of pace from the standard Tetris-inspired drivel, and although I'm not much of a puzzler game fan I found myself playing this until I finished it. More relaxed than Tetris and a lot of fun in the Vs. mode. Oh, and that puzzle mode - after a bit it gets VERY evil. The Mario characters don't seem to fit in quite right, probably because Nintendo didn't make this game. - Pat

LANDSTALKER	SEGA
ACTION RPG	GENESIS
1 PLAYER	AVERAGE

Much better than its prequels, Stranded in the Darkness and Shining Force, Landstalker blends the old NES title Solstice with Zelda style fighting into the best game of its type on the Genesis. Incredible graphics and detail went into this game, and I found it to be more enjoyable than any other RPG on the Genesis. Very well done if a wee bit frustrating at times. - Pat

RUN SABER	ATLUS
ACTION	SNES
1 OR 2 PLAYERS	AVERAGE

This game is very average. It tries hard to be Strider for SNES but fails with uninspired backgrounds, enemies, and playability. Lots of technique and two-player options can't save Run Saber from taking its rightful place along with other OK titles. Boring. - Pat

SILPHEED	SEGA
SHOOTER	SEGA CD
1 PLAYER	HARD

This is not the god of all polygon shooters that EGM and several fanzines proclaimed it to be. In fact, it's a very average, below average even, shooter with lame weapons, lame enemies, and REALLY LAME BOSSES (You'll laugh out loud when your wingman screams "look at the size of that thing!" and a tiny ship enters the battle. Oh, and that planet scene that EGM used to tout Silpheed's graphics over Starfox - it SUCKS! Choppy, choppy, choppy. Great backgrounds, though - and those cinemas... WOW! Too bad the game itself is no big deal. - Pat

FINAL FIGHT CD	SEGA
ACTION/FIGHTING	SEGA CD
1 OR 2 PLAYERS	AVERAGE

Hello! Finally a great translation of the coin-op has arrived - and it's only three years late! Guy is here, the women are here, the slowdown is here... d'oh! Thankfully, it's not as bad as the SNES game was with ONE player!!! The music sucks, too, but you can't have it all. - Pat

WORLD HEROES	SUNSOFT
FIGHTING	SNES
1 OR 2 PLAYERS	EASY

The not-so-thinly-veiled SFII clone comes to roost on the SNES, and it's a much better translation than Takara's Fatal Fury. Some complain about the slowness of the gameplay, but I didn't notice. As fighting games go, World Heroes is good. Lots of diversity, the Fatal matches are present, good special moves, and great graphics make it a game to actually hold my interest for a couple hours before returning to SFII Turbo. - Pat

AERO THE ACROBAT	SUNSOFT
ACTION	GENESIS
1 IDIOT	WHO CARES?

Not so fast, Sunsoft, you're not off the hook yet. This game was touted as great by most of the mags, so I played it thinking I was in for unique, well-made game. WRONG!!! I HATE this game! Aero's slow, has LAME attacks, controls slowly fights TINY enemies, all to the sound of some of the most annoying music ever written. On top of that, it's just NO FUN to play at all! I'd rather play Bubsy! I'd rather set myself on fire and jump into gasoline! - Pat

DASHIN' DESPERADOES	DATA EAST
ACTION	GENESIS
1 OR 2 PLAYERS	HARD

I'd rather play Aero the Acrobat than this!!! No, I'm only kidding - I liked this game a little better than Aero, although I sure as hell wouldn't buy it. You basically race against either the computer or a bud (a 'la Sonic 2) to the end of each stage. You can throw bombs and other stuff at each other and really annoy one another while you play. A good competition game, but average graphics, sounds, and control kill it. For the easily frustrated - don't play against the computer. Trust me. - Pat

TUFF'E NUFF	JALECO
FIGHTING	SNES
1 OR 2 PLAYERS	HARD

This is a decent fighter with really outstanding graphics and animation. The replay mode is neat at first but gets repetitive after about an hour and you can't skip it entirely. I like the way your special moves get more powerful and better looking after every 3 fights or so. Gameplay is on the slow side, and some special attacks are very hard to do. Four characters aren't enough, especially when 2 are identical and one is slow and useless. Play as the girl. - Pat



DRACULA X	KONAMI
ACTION	DUO(JAPAN)
1 PLAYER	AVERAGE

Dracula X is one of the best games I've ever played, period! Though it borrows lots from the previous Vampire Killers (Castlevania over here), it actually improves the game 'cause it made me get totally nostalgic. The BGM is especially awesome - spooky and dramatic. It's even got "Roland Sound Space", whatever that is. The graphics are amazing; most of the backgrounds are fully animated (with lots of parallaxing), and the trademark Konami subtle details and super-smooth animation is there too. The game itself is the most nonlinear I've ever seen. Most of the 13 levels have 2 or more completely different routes. A few have about 4! Fortunately, there are three save spaces, and a stage select for the levels you've already completed. What's that, you want blood? No censored stuff here! There's enough even for MK-type people. Forget 3DO, Jaguar, RISC and 32, 64, 65536 bit, whatever they call them, BUY DRACULA X!!!! (or, first buy a Duo, then buy Dracula X). It's so incredible, mere words can't suffice.

- Ara Shirinian

ROCK 'N ROLL RACING	
INTERPLAY	
RACING	SNES
1 OR 2 PLAYERS	ADJ.

Interplay has done a great job of capturing exactly what RC Pro-Am should have been. Great music - the best I've heard with incredible renditions of "Paranoid" and "Peter Gunn" among others. The graphics are very good, but the voice of the announcer is seamless, and funny, too. There's nothing like skidding around to face back the way you came and unloading your full arsenal at the oncoming traffic as Larry Huffman screams "Snake unleashes hot fury!" It does get repetitive in the one player mode, but Vs. is where it's at - the fun of this as a two player competition is rivaled only by Bomberman '93. There's nothing like toasting a good friend on the open road and then leaving a string of mines for him! - Pat

BATTLETOADS/DOUBLE DRAGON	
TRADEWEST	
ACTION/FIGHTING	SNES
1 OR 2 PLAYERS	HARD

If you're expecting Battlemaniacs, well... you're expecting far too much. Aside from some of the best guitar riffs you'll ever hear on a 16-bit system, & art par excellence on the intermission screens, the game hasn't been changed from the NES version - not good considering its anemic animation and imprecise control. Chalk up another 16-bit failure from the guys at Rare. Can't wait for the even worse Genesis version...

- Jess Ragan

SPLATTERHOUSE 3	NAMCO
ACTION/FIGHTING	GENESIS
1 PLAYER	HARD

This is an improvement over the second game, in that you can choose your own route through each floor. However, too few moves and a relentless timer keep fun away (is there any way to save Jennifer in stage 2?) Sadly, this would have been great 2 years ago, but now we have Streets of Rage 2 and much, much higher standards for games like this. Only die-hard fans of the original need apply, and even they should rent first. - Pat

DRACULA	IMAGESOFT
ACTION	SEGA CD
1 PLAYER	HARD

This game is simply hideous. The control is horrid, the FMV, where it is taken straight from the movie, is so pixellized and blocky it's almost unrecognizable, and the game is pathetic. The backgrounds are very nice, but they are merely the setting for an agonizingly slow side-scroller which pits your character against ALL of the most annoying types of enemy in any game - birds, bats, rats, and bugs! There's no way to avoid all of them, and you just can't try to fight them all off because of the insipid control. Inviting Lorena Bobbit into my bed with a meat cleaver would be less painful than playing this sorry excuse for a CD game. - Pat

ALADDIN	CAPCOM
ACTION	SNES
1 PLAYER	AVERAGE

Reminiscent of Capcom's NES Disney carts from a time unlike our own (sci-fi enough, Pat?), this simply doesn't have the raw animation might or true Disney look (as it was done without the Digicel process & designed in Japan) that the Genesis version by Dave Perry (which, I must add, was rather basic in itself) possesses. An awkward gymnastic flip makes leaping to & from tiny footholds a frustrating endeavor from stage 2 on, making this cart worthwhile only for those Disney fans rabid enough to accept its faults. Personally, I feel that the similar play mechanics of Hook were executed with a more deft hand, but if you insist...

- Jess Ragan

PLOK	TRADEWEST
ACTION	SNES
1 PLAYER	AVERAGE

In my opinion, Plok is the best new game character of the year. He is unassuming and less abrasive than the bigger names like Bubsy, Aero, Socket, Awesome Possum and others. The play mechanics are fairly unique, and the sound and music are very well-done. The graphics manage a cartoony look without losing the vibrant color of the SNES like Pink Panther did. The only thing that stops Plok from getting a 9 and a recommendation to purchase is the noticable absence of a password or save feature. The first stage consists of several scenes, as does the second, and after a few plays, gamers will grow tired of repeating them over and over. - Pat

LINK'S AWAKENING	NINTENDO
ACTION RPG	GAMEBOY
1 PLAYER	HARD

This is the best game ever to come out for Nintendo's portable. Even in comparison to the SNES version, this one actually comes out on top with more quest for your money. The graphics are comparable too, only without the color. Actually, the graphics are amazing - I never thought the Gameboy was capable of handling such a complex game without compromising something, and I bet Sush-X didn't either. Ha ha ha! Get this game. Buy a Gameboy FOR this game! - Pat

THE STANDOFF:SFII

BY ADRIAN *JOURGENSEN PROCTOR

SFII TURBO FIGHTING	CAPCOM SNES
GRAPHICS: 9	MUSIC: 8
SOUND: 9	VOICE: 8
GAMEPLAY: 10	FUN: 10
OVERALL: 9.5	

SFII CHAMPION EDITION FIGHTING	NEC P.C. ENGINE
GRAPHICS: 9	MUSIC: 9.5
SOUND: 8	VOICE: 10
GAMEPLAY: 8.5	FUN: 10
OVERALL: 9	

SFII SPECIAL CE FIGHTING	CAPCOM GENESIS
GRAPHICS: 9	MUSIC: 9
SOUND: 8	VOICE: 6
GAMEPLAY: 10	FUN(W/O SOUND): 10
OVERALL: 8	

I still can't believe this game was done this well! The Turbo edition isn't suffer more than any of the other games version is that the arcade's disgusting on this game; it's just the regular due to the lack of colors and the color palette doesn't stick out as much Champion Edition. Fortunately, NEC GODAWFUL sound! But hey, this (whew!). Anyway, if you don't know by worked out the disadvantages of the version does have it's good points - such now, the SNES version of the game original arcade CE and rounded the as it's the only version with the arcade features the Champion Edition and the extremely powerful characters and the intro, all the options of the SNES version Turbo with up to 10 different speeds weak and kind of suffering characters without the usage of a code and last but and all the cool turbo tricks. This game to turbo status. The six button not least, a tournament mode where you out of all the other versions mimicks controller works nicely and makes and a friend pick five fighters each and the arcade the closest with the large moves like the tiger knee easy to you slug it out until only one is standing. color palette, hard hitting sound effects, execute. But the voices blew me I found that it was easier to pull off backgrounds and improved graphics away! They are so much closer to the combos in this version than any of the and combos.

My main gripe with the game, SFII home games! Wait till you hear others especially the P.C. Engine which though, are the voices and music of the elephants on Dhalsim's level! They suffers from the inability to pull off some levels. For example, the music roar throughout the entire fight! consistant charge combos. I recommend on Zangief's level is still high pitched The game does have its off the sound, because I turned the game and rushed and so are many of the shortcomings such as while it copies off after 15 minutes of the sound. the characters' voices. Wait till you hear the arcade's music better than SNES it pictures!! the music when you beat the game with all sounds very synthesized rather than the game, check out the cool digitized does not have multi-scrolling

warped floors (this was surprising) it does not have multi-scrolling backgrounds. You'll probably be too into the game to notice this though, because the game puts up a good fight. A must have for TG-16 owners.

THE VERDICT

In conclusion, the SNES version is the best of the three with graphics, sound, and gameplay identical to the arcade game. The P.C. Engine is a close second surpassing most of the systems limitations with many of the combinations being accessible yet requiring much more precision and timing. Last but not least is the Sega version which sports more options and beter combos because of the controller yet suffers significantly in the colors and voice departments which are two of the factors that made SFII a hit. All in all these are pretty good translations. Buy one or buy 'em all and get ready to rumble.

PLUM SEZ

BY RICH PLUMMER

'Ello, 'ello, 'ello! I'm back! After long hours out on the ocean chasing mermaids and hunting the elusive white whale I'm back on the mainland... and lovin' it! For those of you who aren't familiar with me I'm Rich Plummer, the guy who is in the credits but hasn't made an appearance since issue one. Well, now I'm here and it's my time to speak, so make sure you have clean underwear and fresh batteries and we'll get to it!

First of all, I'm sure that a good number of you readers are also involved in collecting comics. I've been buying comics for a few years now and I must say I'm disappointed.

The Japanese comics are still turning out gritty new stories with fantastic art and a great mix of action, adventure, and fantasy. Now why is it that they can maintain stories like this and companies like Marvel have to fall back on rehashed Chris Claremontish schlock every time you open one of their books? Even with the introduction of new titles and universes there is only so much you can do in the superhero genre. Three things come to mind that confuse me, starting with the death of Superman. Granted, I've liked the big blue cheese for years, but why would you kill him if you're going to bring him back? I thought that was Marvels job, which in fact brings me to the return of Magneto. This guy has died and come back to life more times than I've read Studs Kirby on the can. Magneto is tough as hell, but he's not that tough.

Now what's up with this new Batman? I understand that Bruce is crippled and this new guy has designed a new costume, but I can't help but wonder if the design should have stayed closer to the original. I'm not sure that these Wolverine-type claws and flashy gold and chrome armor quite paints a picture of a creature of the night. Also, the art SUCKED. Ernie Colon did a better job on Hot Stuff and Casper the Ghost. You would think that for a whopper of an issue like Batman #500 they could get an artist that would make it visually stunning.

Do you like anime? Good! Then run out and get a copy of Bio-Booster Armor Guyver. You'll be glad you did!

Well, the last thing I have to add is in reference to last issue when Pat was doing a run-down of arcade fighting games - he forgot to mention the game Knuckle Heads (*never saw it - Pat*). This stand-up stinker is made by Irem or Technos, I can't remember which for sure. The cast of characters are run of the mill (i.e. if you can do Ken's fireball and dragon punch you can do the moves for the main character). The graphics are decent, but it's looks are offset by the cheezy sound effects and rotten music. This is one of the times I thought that wasted quarter would have bought a more exciting piece of bubblegum!

ENTER THE DRAGONS

BY PAT REYNOLDS

With the popularity of fighting games brought on by SFII and its many, many followers, it's no surprise that the image of perhaps the greatest fighter who ever lived has turned up several times in this flood of games. Not everybody may know that Bruce Lee actually was involved in dozens of street fights. Because of his reputation as the best fighter in the world, everybody and their sensei wanted a crack at the man. So, they'd challenge him on the streets, and, if Bruce accepted, suffer a severe beating. Luckily for many of these would-be-cripples, Lee knew he was better just by looking at them and turned down more challenges than he took up. Perhaps the funniest story I ever heard about this aspect of Bruce Lee's life was when, during his stint as Kato on the Batman TV series, he was challenged by none other than Robin himself, offscreen. Needless to say, I would have given anything to have been there to witness first hand the beating that Bruce gave him. Now, then, let's take a look at how well (or poorly) the great one has been depicted in three fighting games.

The first game to employ a definitely Lee-inspired character was SNK's World Heroes. The not so subtly named Dragon is quick, and packs a couple of mean two hit attacks. Still, graphically he isn't the best representation of Lee; while SNK obviously tried to incorporate some of his trademark moves (like licking his thumb before the fight, and the posing after he wins) he lacks the musculature and style of the real Dragon. This Dragon is a good start, and I was disappointed to find that no graphic changes were apparent in the character in the sequel.

Next, perhaps the most famous game out after the release of SFII, Mortal Kombat, appeared on the scene. Because real actors were used, Liu Kang obviously is NOT Bruce Lee, but he looks and sounds a lot more like him than Dragon. Unfortunately, the biggest downfall of MK is the fact that all the characters have exactly the same basic moves, which unfortunately means that Liu Kang is just like the rest of the crowd except for his special moves.

Leave it to Capcom to create the best looking, sounding, and playable Lee clone to date. Fei Long captures the essence of Lee in his stance, moves and voice. Even his portrait bears an uncanny likeness. Capcom emphasizes his speed as well, the quality that gave Lee his greatest advantage. Fei Long has a double hit roundhouse kick that catches opponents off-balance and a three hit dash punch that looks and sounds great! The remaining range of attacks is just as good - quick punches and kicks that emphasize the incredible reach that Lee was capable of. The brown hair has got to go, though.

Dragon and Liu Kang are nice homages to the legend of Bruce Lee, invoking his image and some of his grace, but Fei Long is a true testament to the style and prowess of Lee. Super Street Fighter II is worth my time just for that, even though there are dozens of other reasons to play it too. Bring it home, Capcom, I'm behind you.

FEAR MY ART

REVIEW BY 3/5THS MAN

After giving this a nice hard plug in Project: Ignition (no need to thank me, Pat!), I decided to give it my honest critique. Being the skinflint I am, I've decided to just peek over Jess' shoulder rather than spend \$5.00 on something that I can just steal when my editor's back is turned (he's not reading this, is he?).

For those of you without that option, here's the deal - Pat Reynolds has one major dark side that he hasn't told you about. In addition to the usual Pat hallmarks (manga, plenty 'o lines, etc.), you're basically inviting Pat to unlock a door of his past (mostly, his high school years) which finds our famed art-meister cloaked in a wizard's garb, walking amongst skull-strewn fields of destruction.

Quite a bit of anger permeates through his '89-'90 pieces - especially strange, since much of his art manages to squeeze in plenty of happy faces - a rather bizarre contrast, especially in pieces like the "Universe of Blood", where a series of gory and demented conflicts aren't helped by a somewhat irritating presence of the pattern plastered on the wizard Zir (a cleverly hidden message in that name has a correlation to his habit of donning a wizard's robe in his earlier works). Even still, in his best pages, Pat really shines, taking advantage of the "Where's Waldo" style of filling some pages to the brim - or just putting huge amounts of detail (I just noticed the menacing faces in the "Patience" piece!!!) and an equally heavy serving of imagination into others.

One other gripe I did have with Fear My Art was the staid amount of new material, especially items with electronic game themes. Those that do make an appearance are welcome (you've gotta love watching a big-chinned Geraldo about to be snatched and taken to eternal enslavement and torture!), but aren't Pat's best works - the "Rocket Knight Adventures" cover especially was disheartening. Still, others like the IBTL cover based on "Mutant League Football" are far more convincing than the games themselves!

It's not perfect, but Fear My Art is definitely something to look into if you're the kind of guy who wants something no one else dares to touch on your coffee table - this portfolio fits that niche like a 9-pin joystick plug to a Genesis port. After all, most 'zines would be more than happy to use nearly any of the pages as covers - and where else can you get a scoop of chocolate praline from the deliverer of death?



VALLEY OF QUARTERS

BY MATT LOTTI

For some bizarre reason I seem to be accumulating a lot of quarters lately, so what better place to spend them than at a peep show! Oops, I mean arcade...

The first game that caught my eye when I journeyed in was a large Punisher machine. It looked quite appealing, similar to the comic book. It had a sort of Final Fight-like feel to it. The control is somewhat fluid, and the difficulty level is set just right. Well, at least it has higher standards than the horrific Time Killers coin-op right across the way. Speaking of Time Killers, why are they letting T*HQ program this one, anyway? Don't they realize that when a bad company manufactures an equally pathetic title the result will be a horrid home version? For some reason that just doesn't make much sense...

Boring fighting games still manage to clutter this arcade, taking up space that would be used more efficiently to place better titles, like the up-and-coming Sonic game (seems promising from EGM's blurry photos) and Saturday Night Slam Masters (if it's from Capcom, then it should be pretty good). What's happening to these companies' brains, anyway? I think they're in DEEP SPACE (Intentional pun, Brent, you loser). Till next we meet, don't forget to wear clean underwear and be sure to floss.

THE EVEN BIGGER FIND PAT REYNOLDS CONTEST!!!!

Back in issue 3, I announced a contest which challenged readers to search through magazines and fanzines for mention of yours truly. Well, since then, I've thought of even MORE opportunities for scavenger hunt-lovers to seek out my beloved name! However, this will not be as easy, although it does include some of the same items from the first contest (yes, Russ, the ones you already sent will count toward it). Find these items:

1. 5 reviews of Fantazine in national magazines
2. 16 covers by Pat Reynolds (GameLord and Fantazine DO count!)
3. 1 letter from Pat in the pages of Groo The Wanderer
4. A high score and password by Pat in EGM and VG+CE respectively.

The winner of this contest receives 2 Japanese SFI rubber figures, Fear My Art, and the lifetime subscription, maybe more!

THE FANTAZINE INTERVIEW: TABITHA PAIGE

Tabitha Paige, better known as just Paige, entered the EG fandom scene early this fall and has rocketed out four issues of her fanzine Counterpoint! very quickly, despite theories about her existence (or lack of), and that most evil of entities, the fanzine no-show.

FANTAZINE: What prompted you to start a fanzine about video games?

PAIGE: Well, being a gamer and a reader of Electronic Games, I was naturally curious about this "underworld" of sorts that exists with fanzines. Also, I didn't see any fanzines by female editors being reviewed in EG, and I thought it was high time one jumped in.

FANTAZINE: Being that you are female, and therefore a new element in fandom, what has response to Counterpoint! been like?

PAIGE: A new element in THIS fandom, Pat. There are other fandoms which aren't as male-dominated as this one. Anyway, response to my 'zine has been really good. Considering that I've only been reviewed or mentioned in 3 other 'zines, I guess you could say that it's been great. Some people think I have a problem with the constant barrage of sexual innuendo that drops into my hands, but I do my share in encouraging that, I guess. I'm not some extremist feminist freak who wants to kill all the men, either.

FANTAZINE: You haven't announced a schedule for Counterpoint yet, but you sent out four issues in less than two months! Will you announce a bi-weekly schedule or do you just do the issues whenever you have time.

PAIGE: Well, issue 5 is the final one, I'll tell you why later, but yeah, I basically do a whole issue in one night, working all night. I did issues 3 and 4 back to back, two nights in a row, and issue 5 is done now, but won't be sent out for another couple of weeks - it'll probably still beat your issue to press though.

FANTAZINE: I'm not going to say much about this "controversy" of sorts that has sprung up regarding you and me; did you want to mention it or let it go?

PAIGE: What, you mean that nonsense

about how I don't exist and that I'm really YOU? My last issue is mainly about that, not to mention because of that, so I suppose I'll just say this: EG fandom is full of male chauvinist assholes!

FANTAZINE: Yes, well I think that's blown over by now, anyway, but if these guys want to go on thinking that, it's their right to be stupid. I hear through the grape vine that Joe Santulli's mad at you about stealing his fanzine review style as well as misinterpreting his "...if you're for real" comment on the back of Digital Press. Any comments?

PAIGE: Joe thinks I stole his fanzine review style? That's ridiculous; my first fanzine column was done and mailed out before I ever saw Joe's fanzine. I'll admit that after seeing Digital Press, they do bear similarities, and if he's really upset about it he should be happy to know that I won't be around anymore. As for his comment on DP about me, all my talk in Counterpoint! about sociology and me not being real had NOTHING to do with that. I really don't give a damn whether or not people think I exist or not - I just have a problem with their attitudes.

FANTAZINE: Okay, let's change the subject. What about your attacks on faneds who haven't written or traded 'zines with you?

PAIGE: That's another thing that bugs me about this fandom. Some guys won't even trade fanzines with you - you HAVE to shell out cash to see them. Excuse me, but this is not the big time. In other fandoms you'll find free 'zines, everybody trades (it's top priority), or simple requests for a couple of stamps for an issue. This fandom is like a rat race, but there's no prize. Lots of 'zines are trying to get hot news first, or break into professional magazines, and they lose sight of the purpose of fanzines. It's supposed to be fun, guys. This fandom isn't fun for me anymore.

FANTAZINE: So, do you have plans to continue in another fandom, or what?

PAIGE: Yeah, what I'm gonna do is basically a 'zine about life, music, and

just anything else I think of. I'll probably keep it local - I can sell it at bookstores and music shops, or pass it out free at school. As long as people are reading my stuff I'll be happy. I don't have a title yet and it certainly won't be as frequent as Counterpoint! was - I was trying too hard to break into a new fandom with that. The new one won't have that sort of pressure. No subscribers, no fanzine trading, probably no address - just an anonymous voice speaking her mind.

FANTAZINE: You've said so much negative stuff about EG fandom; did you find anything good here?

PAIGE: Oh, sure. Sorry to be so negative. I've gotten a lot of really good fanzines that I'll probably either contribute to or subscribe to in order to insure that I still get them after I drop Counterpoint! I really enjoy reading Project: Ignition, Digital Press, Concordant Opposition, In Between The Lines, yours, and a few others. Even though I complain about the bad elements here, the good really do outnumber them. I've probably only seen a fraction of all the 'zines, anyway. I just got one called V that actually has a female writer who does a column on why there aren't more female gamers; it's very true and well-written. I see hope for this fandom, surely.

FANTAZINE: Well, I'm glad you could do this interview for us. I think I speak for most of this fandom in saying that Counterpoint! certainly had an impact here, and I for one am sorry to see it go.

PAIGE: Well, it's not like I'm going to be gone for good - I'm still reachable at my P.O. Box, and I'll be writing more for other 'zines now that I'm not doing my own anymore. In fact I've been offered a position on the staff of a new 'zine called Hardcore as an associate editor which I'll probably accept. You're welcome for the interview - thanks for the covers and reviews and stuff. Ta!

INTIM IDATING

BY TIM PRIEST

"To the tunnels!" I cried as I leapt into action, my mind feverishly racing over the probable causes of the mayhem. As I pulled on my boot and settled into the tunnel traveling Timmobile my mind wandered, meandered actually, ever so gracefully back to the start of all this. But I won't bore you with the details. The key point of this issue's column is to stress the battle cry. No hero can truly attain greatness without a proper, thought-provoking, nerve racking, nose bleeding, truly inspiring call to arms. Well, okay, a certain Dark Knight doesn't have one, but, well, you tell him.

The battle cry should be both appropriate and easy to remember. Keep it short and sweet. You don't want to have to refer to cue cards as you bellow "Beware, you brutish band, for the Bodacious Bondage Babe from Below now meticulously readies herself to engage in life-threatening battle!" The enthusiasm is just not there. Before you get to the 44th word you will have a searing beam of energy burning through your nether regions (or a bullet, knife, or any other assorted projectile of preference). Your battle cry should sum up what you stand for or explain how you go about fighting crime. As in "It's clobbering time!" allows pertinent information about the hero's fighting style. Someone screaming "Lasers do your stuff!" isn't going to turn to mist and mess your sinuses up.

My cry of "To the tunnels!" allows my enemies to know that I have access to the city's sewers. It's kind of an unwritten law of heroes. They are supposed to be fair. Of course you can still be tricky about it. It is entirely within the limits to send a telegram to your arch-villain proclaiming "It's skull-squashing season!!" while you swing a bat at his head as he is reading it. This enables you to be both heroic by playing fair and to destroy his head, which is another key factor of being a super hero. Destroy villains heads, protect your own.

But anyways, "To the tunnels!" I cry for my help is needed elsewhere. I must go. Has anyone seen my kevlar whip? Mom! Did you wash my cape?

Hey Intimidator,

I was working in my lab trying to develop a way to use my finger and toenails as projectile weapons and then it hit me. A big bottle off the top shelf. It contained a mess of old chemicals that I just haphazardly mixed together and precariously placed atop a rickety shelf. Anyway, its contents covered me from head to toe and disintegrated all my clothes. I guess I should have tried to wash it off but it kind of tickled my nether regions and I've been lonely lately. Anyhwcw, when I did go to wash it off it had all been absorbed into my skin. It left me with an incredible tan and the ability to turn into mist. Well not really the ability, more like I turn into mist whenever I get excited. So now when a villain gets me ticked off I get carried off by a ventilation system or a strong cough. I don't know what to do. I can't stay calm during battle if I don't grit my teeth. What will my fans think of me?

Mister Mystic Mist from Mississippi

Miss,

Sounds to me like you got what you deserve. Projectile toenails are incredibly passe. About the whole mist thing, though, I think you've got bigger problems than doing battle. What about your sex life? Unless you know a cute vaporizer you're screwed (pun intended).

Intimidator

HEY INTIMIDATOR

BY TIM PRIEST, A.K.A. THE INTIMIDATOR

Gather around gentle readers, take precautionary measures, warn the weak and put the children to bed. Fantazine proudly brings you the literary stylings of the Intimidator. He has been fed but be careful. We the management hold no liabilities and with this proclamation we present to you a question and answer column concerning anything and everything. Enjoy or die.

Hey Intimidator,

What are your measurements? If you know what I mean.

Bodacious Bondage Babe from Below

Hey lady (and I use the term loosely),

My measurements are 12 by 12. Get it? I'm square! I don't dig having to trudge through all this smut mail sent in by you sickos! So take your pen and enjoy it. (sit and spin lady, sit and spin).

Hey Intimidator,

What's the capitol of Utah.

Lil Petey

No lil petey,

Salt Lake City is the capitol of Utah. Need I remind you to punctuate your questions properly people?

Hey Intimidator,

You suck!

Promiscuous Pam

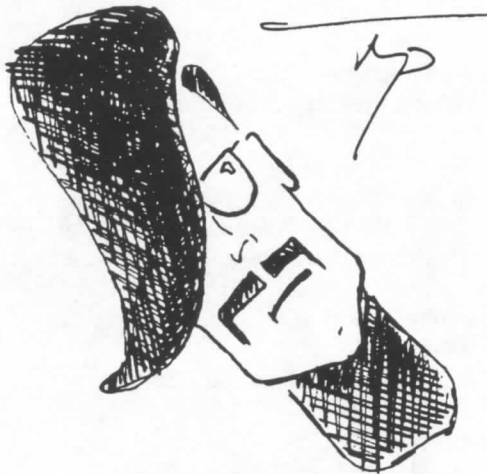
Pam,

And you said you'd never tell.

INTIM IDATING

BY TIM PRIEST

Life's a bath, then you dry. Life's a brooch, that you wear. Life's a bench, that you sit on. Life's a brunch, then you take a nap. Life's a batch (of cookies), then you diet. Life's a breeze, from the north I think. Life's a bundt cake, save me a piece. Life's a broom, clean up when you're done. Life's a book, don't throw it. Life's peanut brittle (Dad's favorite). Life's a boot, size 13 double wide. Life's a bride, also size 13 double wide. Life's a bucket, dear Liza. Life's a biscuit, a damn big biscuit. Life's a bone, down boy! Life's a pitch, then you bunt. Life's a basket, full of fruits. Life's a beetle, yeh yeh yeh. Life's a bus, save your ticket in case you want to transfer later. Life's a body, look out for the asshole. Life's a board game, wheeeeeeeee. Life's a bakery, now serving #200,349,800. Life's a bobaloo, Rickeee. Life's a backyard, Mom wants you in by 6. Life's a bunny, isn't he cute. Life's a baby, that cries a lot. Life's a burglar, that you shoot. Life's a bat, man. Life's a bomb, you should duck. Life's a bug (the good kind that eats other bugs).



tasters really have a lot of nerve. It's pretty obvious that they're running scared - who doesn't know that video games are far and away far superior to movies? Sick. Just sick. It's only because the greedy despots can't get their hands on the bucks, & with all the cinematic FLOPS going around, they've got to attack other artforms to hide their own miserable failures. Support your hobby - burn down a theatre ("Oh, no!", Mueller's saying. "They'll do it, too, the mentally imbalanced fools! Run and hide! It's a Tazmanian devil!")

With that out of the way, let's focus on Trip Hawkins. I adore this guy. He's everything I want a representative for my hobby to be - determined, intelligent, & ready to make gaming a media standard. Too bad Nintendo's rumored system is even better than the 3DO.

Hmm... Mark Allen bashes Star Fox. Atari comes out with the Jaguar, the ugliest system on this or any other planet. They blatantly rip off Nintendo's idea and stuff cat heads into space suits (the most pitiful thing I've seen in a while). Mark Allen steamrolls over all of his Atari garbage, buys a Genesis, & gets a life. Does that about cover it? Trevor McFur - sheesh! Wow, guys, I'm certainly fooled! Sell me a bridge while you're at it!!!

Well, I've wasted more than enough of your time for one day. This has been Jess, the only fanned with the strange, inhuman ability to breathe through his eye (or at least the only one to admit it), saying sayanora, David Chau, bye-bye, & later!

YEEEEOWW!

BY JESS RAGAN

Hey! I'm back! Kinda surprised about that too, from the crap I gave editor Reynolds about that last issue. What am I complaining about, anyhow? Oh, yeah, everything. So what am I waiting for? Let's rush like a rolling Limbaugh down a 45 degree incline (hey, I'm overweight, too! I have the right to crack a few jokes amongst my fellow bru'thas [now, doesn't that sound stupid to you? we're ALL "bru'thas" anyhow! Sorry, blatant political statement there...])!

So, what do you do if you've singlehandedly sabotaged the game industry and want to do it again? If you're Slime/Warnerd, you simply devise a liberal propoganda rag named "Entertainment Weekly" to fire even more salvos at it. Y'see, this 'zine, published by a myriad of balding (whoops! I am! Never mind...), middle-aged, synthetic compassion producing idealists with about as much knowledge about gaming as King Kong has etiquette, has constantly slammed the hobby into the ground, going so far as to put all information pertaining to it in the KIDS section, next to Barney videos! The arrogant bastards even told Sega to "tone down" their games... but I've had my revenge. Look for "Opinionoids", my newest column in P:I which blatantly copies the successes of Jim Mueller's "Hot Sheet"...

As a matter of fact, the entire movie industry (well, not Disney; for once they're cool) has taken up arms against gamedom. Apparently some idiot who crapped his pants to a golden brown after LOSING SO MUCH MONEY ON "THE LAST ACTION HERO" (note the emphasis) has decided to make someone else's life miserable by telling the MPAA to shun Sega's attempt to get true ratings (G, PG, PG-13, R & NC-17). What does this mean to us? Quite frankly, we get lousy Sega-concocted ones while the film FILTH out there laugh their scrotums off over blocking an attempt to normalize gaming. Y'know, these testicle

FANZINE FEEDBACK

FANZINE REVIEWS BY PAT REYNOLDS

Here we are in what has to be the biggest fanzine review column ever attempted in EG fandom. The following pages contain reviews of every 'zine I get, although it's far from complete. Unfortunately, due to time and space limitations, some of the more frivolous aspects of the fandom section, such as the classic fanzines, Russ Perry Jr. drawing, and fandom awards had to be dropped. However, I have selected my personal top ten fanzines, and denoted each with an asterisk behind the review. Remember, these are only the opinions of one guy. Note that price listed is per issue.

BLIP! BI-MONTHLY/\$1
TIM JOHNSON
2008 COLORADO AVE
ROCKFORD IL 61108-6062
ISSUE REVIEWED: 5

Tim Johnson puts out a very nice, uh... bundle of paper stapled together. It took me a bit to figure out that I had to rip it open to get at it, but once I did I discovered a decent little fanzine, albeit somewhat shredded. Blip! has a slapped together look about it, as almost every page appears to have been done on a different computer, word processor, or typewriter. This doesn't detract from a 'zine filled with reviews and comics.

CONCEPT QUARTERLY/\$1.50
JESS RAGAN
12830 M-60 EAST
BURLINGTON MI 49029
ISSUE REVIEWED: 2

Jess' programming 'zine hasn't changed much since the last issue of Fantazine... because I reviewed this very issue last time. In case you missed it, Concept is full of Ragan-style cartoons, humor, and opinion. A very unique approach to the gaming world is taken, that of the programmers rather than the games themselves, making for interesting reading.

CONCORDANT OPPOSITION BI-MONTHLY/\$1
JEFF BOGUMIL
187 N STATE RR 2 APT B-201
NEW MARTINSVILLE WV 26155
1631 ISSUE REVIEWED: 3

The latest issue of Jeff Bogumil's above average 'zine opens with a very optimistic review of the Sega CD by Chip Landwher. I wish I could be so enthusiastic about the purchase. The ever-present Jess Ragan jumps onboard with reviews and articles, and there's a unique article on how to convert a PC joystick into a Vectrex controller. Of course, this from the fanzine who taught us how to hook an Atari 2600 to a computer monitor; obviously not kiddie play. Accompanying this is a review of the Vectrex system itself, a list of every game ever made for the system, and info on how to purchase the elusive Vectrex multi-cart. Pick up an issue of CO, you can't miss.

DIGITAL PRESS BI-MONTHLY/\$1
JOE SANTULLI
44 HUNTER PLACE
POMPTON LAKES NJ 07442-2037
ISSUE REVIEWED: 15

What can I say about DP that hasn't already been said much more eloquently? In my opinion, this is the best older fanzine, even though there aren't too many out there past issue 10 yet. DP has only gone up in quality over the years, and look everybody! Jess Ragan starts contributing as a permanent writer with this issue! Just one more reason why Digital Press is on everyone's list.

DYSTOPIA NO SCHEDULE/ FREE
DENNIS CROWLEY
6 HILL STREET
MEDWAY MA 02053
ISSUE REVIEWED: 3

This is less of a regular issue of Dystopia and more of a run-on ad for Sega's Eternal Champions. Don't get me wrong - Dennis managed to get his hands on an EPROM version of the game, so he has reason to write about it for pages on end. Reprinting the character cards from Sega's press kit is a bit too much, but the quality is there for the rest of the issue. Rounding this one out are a Cutting Edge (that sounds familiar) column, and a page devoted to rebutting remarks made about the editor in Counterpoint!

ENTRY LEVEL BI-MONTHLY/\$1.50
DAVE HUNT
10665 LOWDEN AVE
STANTON CA 90680
ISSUE REVIEWED: 3

Entry level starts sporting color covers with this issue, but its real coup is the unique, conversation-like review style which is very laid back and oozes familiarity with games and gaming in general. This issue also marks the last appearance of former co-editor Tyrone Rodriguez, who left EL to start a new 'zine called Hardcore.

FANARCHY BI-MONTHLY/ .50
BEN LEATHERMAN
10 PALO VERDE LANE
GLOBE AZ 85501
ISSUE REVIEWED: 1

This half-sized 'zine from the former Video Game Monthly is a no-holds-barred example of what fan writing should be - all opinion and no bullshit. Take notes, Darren.

FANTAZINE BI-MONTHLY/\$2
PAT REYNOLDS
1740 MILLBROOK SE
GRAND RAPIDS MI 49508
ISSUE REVIEWED: 4

This was my first attempt at getting a video game 'zine and I was not disappointed. I had gotten tired of the magazines on the racks and thought I would try something from the 'zine world. As I said, this did not disappoint me... seems to have an active letters page... "Atari Lord" is a fun feature... the comics of "Jessworld" were barbaric, but the comic on Mark Allen was hilarious... editor Pat Reynolds has various articles that fill the rest of the issue along with other columnists (Tim Priest - I just don't get him?), game reviews, 'zine reviews, and an interesting interview with fan Russ Perry Jr. Other enjoyed featured - "Fatality Friday", "Anime", and "Arcade Action"... Pat has a good mix of features and reviews to keep me a reader for a long time. For those interested in video games, give this one a try.

- Brian "Strength, Virtue" Tramel

GAME FORCE MONTHLY/.50
JEFF BEEDHAM
314 HUSTON ST
LOCK HAVEN PA 17745
ISSUE REVIEWED: 4

Moving to an 8 page, lower cost format, Game Force is relatively consistent in content and variety from issue to issue. In comparison to the first issue, which was little more than a collection of lists, GF has improved greatly, with only a top twenty list to be found amid the reviews, letter page, and arcade coverage.

THE GURU BI-MONTHLY/\$2
BRIAN GOSS
PO BOX 5442
PASADENA TX 77508-5442
ISSUE REVIEWED: 3

Brian Goss does a great job with this ambitious 'zine, which covers Japanese games as well as American titles and computer software as well. Patrick Wilson is one of fandom's better artists as well, and his cover and interior art make it all look good.

HIGH DENSITY BI-MONTHLY/\$1
JONAH JACKSON
56 GLENVIEW DRIVE
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94131
ISSUE REVIEWED: 4

High Density came from out of the blue and instantly took it's place among my favorite 'zines. The clean layout and professional writing rival the best fandom has to offer. A great article on computer vs. video games and gripe column about fighting games round out this issue. HD captures that elusive blend of professional writing and humor, making it an easy read.

HYPERZINE BI-MONTHLY/\$1.25
MATT LOTTI
3251 CAMELOT DRIVE
BETHLEHEM PA 18017
ISSUE REVIEWED: 4

Aside from some confusion on the part of the editor as to what issue this is (Matt says three in his editorial, four on the cover and colophon), Hyperzine is a wonderfully varied 'zine with contributions by Jess Ragan (who also supplied the cover), Ulrich Kempf, and Al Giovetti (who's popping up everywhere these days, unfortunately with exactly the same material). As far as 'zines with opinion go, Hyperzine ranks right up there, thanks mainly to the editor and Jess Ragan.

IN BETWEEN THE LINES
BI-MONTHLY/\$1
SEAN PETTIBONE
2406 RED MAPLE CT
TROY MI 48098
ISSUE REVIEWED: 3

IBTL combines humor, opinion, and a heavy dose of sarcasm like no other 'zine on the market, and crams it all into half the space of most others. Editor Pettibone started IBTL alone and at 8 pages, and now boast 14 pages with 8 contributors (including, you guessed it, Jess Ragan). If Sean continues steadily, IBTL will long remain one of my faves.

THE LASER BI-MONTHLY/\$1.75
MICHAEL PALISANO
2 ROCK RIDGE DRIVE
NORWALK CT 06854
ISSUE REVIEWED: 4

The Laser is an attractive 'zine by Viewpoint contributor Michael Palisano. Incredibly wild headers add to the unique style of the 'zine. The layout is very good, and the best section is the "City of Doom", which contains letters, 'zine reviews, and gossip. The Laser Wars comic is, uh, different, and there's an interesting column about EGM. Good stuff.

MASTER minds MONTHLY?/\$1.50
TODD LINTNER
6406 JACOBS WAY
MADISON WI 53711-3209
ISSUE REVIEWED: 12

As longtime readers of Fantazine know, Master minds is the 'zine that inspired me to start my own fanzine. So it is perhaps not without a bit of bias that I say Mm is my favorite 'zine. Todd fears no one, and it shows in his writing. He is bold, opinionated, and even more importantly, humorous. Mm continues to improve with newer additions like Billy Ray's Anime Theatre adding to the pot. Strangely, this is one of the few longer-running 'zines that Jess Ragan does NOT write for. A definite must-read.

MATRIX BI-MONTHLY/\$1.25
JEREMY STATZ
N 6148 170 ST
ELMWOOD WI 54740
ISSUE REVIEWED: 5

From the Bomberman cover with its hidden messages to the strange digitized pics on the back cover, Matrix is a 'zine deserving of your time. Good reviews, a comparison of Shadowrun and Cyberpunk, 'zine reviews and comic reviews fill Matrix with interesting reading.

MEGAMANIA MONTHLY?/\$1
JIM PITTARO
18 OLD COACH RD
HUDSON NH 03051
ISSUE REVIEWED: 1

MM is a marked improvement over Jim's older Total Supremacy. Jim could make better use of space, but the content is definitely improved. Worth a look.

NEXT GENERATION \$3?
CASEY LOE
5961 CANON CT
VENTURA CA 93003
ISSUE REVIEWED: 14

I probably shouldn't include NG here, as it is now officially deceased, but you might still be able to coax a copy of this issue out of editor Loe, and it would be well worth your time to do so. This issue has what I feel is the absolute best Summer CES coverage in print, anywhere. Back in issue 12, Loe and company provided the best coverage of the Winter CES as well. If it weren't extinct, NG would rank among my top ten 'zines, as it is, it's my favorite defunct title. Send for a copy right away or you might miss out.

PARADOX MONTHLY/\$1
CHRIS JOHNSTON + CO
316 E 11TH AVE
NAPERVILLE IL 60563-2708
ISSUE REVIEWED: 13

Paradox is a great 'zine for its consistency - it comes out regularly, contains always interesting columns and articles, and remains constant in writing and overall value. "I Have a Beef with Galoob's SNES Game Genie", "Quotable Quotes" and "Counteracting Counteracting..." are highlights in this issue, as well as a SFII Turbo feature and the usual assortment of bits and pieces.

POWER PLAY MONTHLY/\$1
SHAWN SURMICK
25 TRUMAN CT
BOYERTOWN PA 19512
ISSUE REVIEWED: 6

I haven't actually gotten an issue of Power Play for some time now, so it may very well have gone out of print. With the latest issue, the same easily correctable flaws, mainly excessive waste of space, are still prevalent (one entire page contains only a sparse top ten list, another a quarter page complaint column). Still, Shawn's love for gaming shows through, and, assuming that he's still plugging away out there, if he corrects the space thing, Power Play can improve. For the limited resources available, it's not a bad 'zine.

PROJECT: IGNITION
BI-MONTHLY/ \$2
JESS RAGAN
12830 M-60 EAST
BURLINGTON MI 49029
ISSUE REVIEWED: 7

Jess' flagship fanzine continues to storm fandom with a relentless barrage of heated opinion, demented cartoons and bathroom humor. Find out why Jess' 'zines are BOTH on my top ten list. Find out why Arnie Katz won't touch this 'zine with a ten foot pole. Find out how Jess manages to put out this 22 page fanzine and still find time to contribute to dozens of others. Send for a copy today - I guarantee you won't be disappointed (and if you are, piss off).

RANDOM ACCESS
INFREQUENT/\$1
SCOTT BOEHMER
CARMAN HALL RM 374
CHARLESTON IL 61920-4260
ISSUE REVIEWED: 2

Video games and bowling? Strange bedfellows indeed, but editor Boehmer makes it interesting to read, at least. The "Shot Pots" comic and "Danger Zone" by The Dangerous Billy Masters are my favorite features. Billy Masters really needs to start his own gaming 'zine. Books dealing with gaming are reviewed as well as games themselves, and of course the obligatory fanzine reviews are well done here too. Good reading.

SNES GAMING BI-MONTHLY/\$1.50
RICH WIGSTONE
770 CONCORD LANE
HOFFMAN ESTATES IL 60195-1835
ISSUE REVIEWED: 5

Rich's 8 page fanzine is easily the best all-SNES fanzine available. Quite possibly the closest to perfect layout I've seen, SNES Gaming is very professional looking and Rich uses his 8 pages very well, packing each with info. Lots of little sidebars and columns add to the usual selection of reviews. This issue has commentary (very unbiased for a one platform 'zine) on Project Reality, as well as Best and Worst games, and a mega comparison of SNES racing titles. Great stuff!

SPECTRUM QUARTERLY/\$1
ARA SHIRINIAN
10904 HAISLIP CT
POTOMAC MD 20854
ISSUE REVIEWED: 4

Print quality takes a dramatic turn for the better this issue, as Ara got a laser printer, and some new fonts, too, from the look of it. Spectrum is another 'zine that continues to improve with each new issue, and number four is no exception. "Games to Avoid", "And Now For Something Completely Different...", and the multi-player reviews give Spectrum a unique edge over the common 'zine. You're #11, Ara, and climbing. Another must see.

SUPER EFFECTS BI-MONTHLY/\$1.25
JANICE HRUSECKY
907 BUTTONWOOD ST
EMMAUS PA 18049
ISSUE REVIEWED: 2

Want a female perspective on gaming? If you can get past Janice's extremely dry writing style, and the fact that her brother Michael inherited exactly the same style, then this 'zine is for you. Supposed Nintendo insider "Roger Nintendo" smells like another "Sushi-X". The clip art could be pasted down much better, you can see edges, but the fanzine reviews are good, as is the fact that Janice has the guts to print an extremely critical letter from Sean Pettibone. Ex-female fanned Paige also helps out.

SUPER GAMER BI-MONTHLY/\$1.50
ERIC LONGDIN
19 VERMONT ST
METHUEN MA 01844
ISSUE REVIEWED: 11

Formerly Super NES Gamer, Eric dropped the one system coverage to bring TG-16 titles into the fold, as well as commentary on 3DC and Jaguar, both hot topics these days. Also thrown in are music reviews. A good 'zine.

THE SHAPE OF GAMING TO COME
DARREN A KROLEWSKI
38150 MT KISCO
STERLING HEIGHTS MI 48310
ISSUE REVIEWED: 10, 11 OR 12?

The good things about TSOGTC are

the nice color cover, the nice spiral binding, the very nice layout, the nice lack of opinion... wait a minute, what's this? TSOGTC has gone from a low-budget, high opinion fanzine to a high-budget, low opinion GamePro wannabe. CES coverage oddly includes the big three, but leaves most of their licensees in the lurch, and really is nothing more than page after page of raving. 9 pages of Jaguar coverage is just a bit of overkill, especially when no hands on experience goes along with it. For \$4.50 you'd do better to pick up a copy of GamePro; the writing's the same and it's entirely in color.

TOTALLY SUPER NES
BI-MONTHLY/ \$1.50
ANDY SAITO
3216 COLEBROOK CT
MISSISSAUGA ON L5N3E2 CANADA
ISSUE REVIEWED: 11

Andy tries his hand at coverage of the 1993 SCES this issue, and, unfortunately, churns out repetitive, overly happy, under-opinionated stuff. NO bad games shown, Andy? How then do you explain the glut of lame SNES titles flooding the stores now? Oh well, that's what happens when you stop trying to please the readers and start trying to make the companies happy. Advice to faneds - leave the ass kissing to EGM and co. Wait until Fantazine's CES coverage.

UPROAR MONTHLY/ \$1?
MICHAEL PITTARO
18 OLD COACH RD
HUDSON NH 03051
ISSUE REVIEWED: 6

Michael violates the first rule of fanediting - he neglects to include a price. I understand that this particular issue is free, but he needs to let readers know how much money to send for future issues. Aside from that, Michael makes good use of digitized images, and his overusage of capitalization is somewhat toned down this time, thankfully. I see the full page Mortal Kombat ad a waste of space, as well as the SFII strategy guide; do we really need another list of all the special moves? No. Weed out those grammar errors, too, Mike.

V: THE VIDEOGAME EXPERIENCE
BI-MONTHLY/\$1.50
DAN THOMAS MACINNES
311 S 70TH AVE WEST
DULUTH MN 55807
ISSUE REVIEWED: 2

Another fanzine which popped up and landed straight on my top ten list, V is comparable to High Density in terms of writing, although MacInnes' writing contains more humor. Great layout, great game reviews, and lots of them, as well as the editor's thoughts on the hot topic of censorship make V one to check out.

VIDEO APOCALYPSE
BI-MONTHLY/ \$1.50
MJ LESNICK
15803 SIGNAL CREEK DRIVE
HOUSTON TX 77095-1624
ISSUE REVIEWED: 5

MJ continues to put out the only fanzine that rivals Project: Ignition in terms of sheer insanity (unless, of course, Tim Priest decides to start a 'zine). VA is also my pick for the best new fanzine of 1993, with page after page of hilarious writing and comics. MJ, who provided the back cover comic in this issue of Fantazine, does his take on the censorship debate, comic-style, and it should not be missed! He hits the target dead on with his guide to bad American cartoons as well. Incredible 'zine!

VIDEO GAME REVIEW
BI-MONTHLY/\$1.50
TRAVIS SCOTT
8 PEPPERTREE
ANDERSON SC 29621
ISSUE REVIEWED: 7

Put your address in the front of your 'zine, Travis! I almost skipped it because I couldn't find it easily. "The Great Debate" on censorship looks to be well-done, though I stopped reading articles on censorship quite a while ago. I did enjoy the section on the best games for the NES, though. The layout is good and the reviews are fair (a 9 for graphics on Jurassic Park [Genesis] ?? Are you blind?). It took Travis quite some time to actually get an issue to me, so here's hoping that he treats paying readers with more speed.

VIDEO UNIVERSE
MONTHLY/ \$1.50
GEORGE WILSON
7640 WOODBINE ROAD
MACUNGIE PA 18062
ISSUE REVIEWED: 7

I've given these guys a hard time in the past, and I'll do it again, I'm sure, but they deserve credit for maintaining a well-laid-out 'zine and sticking with it for so long. Less use of pictures is nice, too. I think that the space between columns could be smaller, and George really didn't need to use a whole page to attack contributor Jess Ragan for speaking his mind - it makes him look like a hypocrite, but on the whole, you could do worse than VU.

VIDEO VIEWS . QUARTERLY/\$1.25
ULRICH KEMPF
4732 GLENWOOD CIRCLE
EMMAUS PA 18049
ISSUE REVIEWED: 18

"Fandom's longest-running fanzine" continues to set a good example of what fanzines can be. It is neither too revolutionary nor too mundane. His lineup of contributors is second only to mine, and includes Todd Lintner and Matt Lotti. Al Giovetti's "A Special Day" sees print here as well as his Ultima VII Part II review. VV misses my top ten only by the fact that it has hit its peak and others are still getting better.

VIEWPOINT BI-MONTHLY/\$1.50
ALEX FRIAS
265 CHERRY ST SUITE 6J
NEW YORK NY 10002
ISSUE REVIEWED: 2

See review last issue - a good 'zine.

WARPZONE NO SCHEDULE/ \$1
MATTHEW SMITH
2509 NEWINGTON CT
CLEMMONS NC 27012
ISSUE REVIEWED: 2

A run-down of portable systems is the highlight of this issue, along with "Gone Bad", an anti-Nintendo article by the editor. The two-column layout is clean if a bit sparse, but faneds must make use of what's available to them. Matthew's gaming cockiness shows in "Challenge Zone", a Sonic 2 dare. Good 'zine.

BACK ISSUES

\$2.00 EACH

Our premiere issue featured a Time Gal cover, tons of reviews, Jess Ragan's "CD Systems: A Lost Cause", the winner from the GameLord reader contest and lots more. Reviews include Starfox, Wing Commander 2, Cyborg Justice, Super Smash TV, and many more.

Next was the Bomberman special issue. Reviews of all the Bomberman games available at the time including Bomberman 93 for TG-16 and Bomberman 1 + 2 for NES. Also speculation about Bomberman 2000, a multi-review of Bomberman 93, Bomberman Top Ten, and a full-page Bomberman cover and interior computer illustration!

Ladybug cover (as seen in VideoGames magazine), tons of reviews, Jess' "The Way Genesis Games Ought to Be", the controversial(?) "The Real Pros", and lots and lots of typos...

Issue 3 featured Ranma 1/2 Part 2 for Super Famicom. Remember, even though it's coming out in the states courtesy of DTMC, our special move guide should still work. Also in this issue is the Brent Hepner retaliation that rocketed Mr. Hepner to Aaron Buckner-like fame. There are two covers for this ish as well, although only one (my favorite) has gone into reprint.

Q*Bert cover, Jessworld (Jess' artwork), interview with fandom's #1 fan, Russ Perry Jr., first Anime column, "Fatality Friday". Tim Priest continues his column on life as a Super Hero as well as debuting "Hey Intimidator", an advice column for struggling heroes. Wooooooo, what fun!

Also available from Wiz Productions are **Fear My Art**, a 90+ page collection of Pat Reynolds artwork dating back to 1989 (\$5.00). **Fantazine Video 2** will be available early next year, with a walk-through of Battlemaniacs, lots of anime previews, and hopefully voiceover. I also hope to type up the **Fantazine Mailing List**, which will still be free with fanzine trade.

COMING IN JANUARY

Now that Fantazine has officially gone bi-monthly, you won't see us again until next year! That means it's time for the first annual Fantazine Game Awards!!! It's gonna be a vote thang and hopefully I've included some type of ballot with this issue or else something really wrong has happened.

Also in next issue - MegaMan, MegaMan, MegaMan!!! Rich Plummer supplies a great MegaMan cover to accompany reviews of MM 6 for NES, MM 4 for GameBoy, and MegaMan X for SNES. **NEW REVIEW SYSTEM STARTS NEXT ISSUE!!!!** Attention reviewers, starting with issue 6 we'll require only a short paragraph and one number (1-10) for each game, in order to include lots of games. Longer full page reviews will be given to a few games (MegaMan next issue).

Tim Priest will tell novice Superheroes how to pick just the right vehicle for their crimefighting needs, and how important it is to choose a well-named car.

CLASSIFIEDS

FOR SALE: Loads of Atari 2600, Intellivision, etc. games, many still sealed in original boxes! \$3 and up.

WANTED: Buying used Atari, Colecovision, Intellivision games. Will pay Digital Press Collector's Guide prices! Write: Joe Santulli, 44 Hunter Place, Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442

WANTED: APF MP1000/Imagination Machine, Entex Adventurevision, Coleco Telstar Game Computer, Entex Select-A-Game, Play Time LCD Projection System and GIMINI system and games. Lots of games for other systems needed. Russ Perry Jr., 5970 Scott St, Omro, WI 54963 (414-685-6187)

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WANTED: A really, REALLY cheap NES or TG-16 (\$20). Also NES, TG-16, Colecovision or 2600 games (\$5-\$10) & a Vic-20

expansion cartridge (badly - \$5-\$15). Especially hunting down Gorf, Galaga, Galaxian, Donkey Kong & Mr. Do's Castle for sets excluding the 2600 and Gyruss for any of the above sets. Jess Ragan, 12830 M-60 East, Burlington, MI 49029

WANTED: HERZOG ZWEI FOR GENESIS!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I Know SOMEBODY has it! Also looking for a 7800 in decent shape. Contact Pat Reynolds at Fantazine's address or phone.

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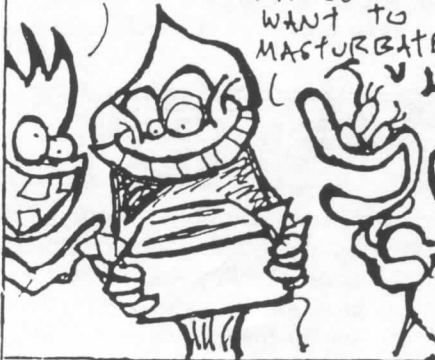
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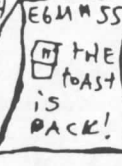
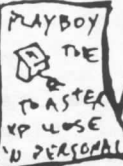
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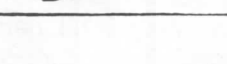


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FROM RUSS PERRY?



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Pat at (616) 452-1744 and vote by phone! Remember, if you
don't do it, we will, and you might not like our picks!

Game of the Year (all systems):

Best Game Genesis:

Best Game SNES:

Best Game Sega CD:

Best Game Duo:

Best Game Gameboy:

Best Game NES:

Worst Game of the Year (all systems):

Best Fighting Game:

Best RPG:

Best Action Platform Game:

Best New Game Character:

Worst New Game Character:

Best Racing Game:

Most Frustrating Game:

Best Fantzine (you must have seen at least 10):

Most Hyped Game that Sucked:

System of the Year:

Worst System of the Year:

Best New System:

Best Game IBM:
Best Sports Game:

